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The Sociopolitical Foundations of Palestinian Resistance, 1948 – 1970

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The Sociopolitical Foundations of Palestinian Resistance, 1948 – 1970

by

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Abstract

The Sociopolitical Foundations of Palestinian Resistance, 1948 – 1970

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Much of the research on the Palestinian Resistance Movement focuses on the period of its most active international terrorism, roughly between the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war and October 1977. These studies focus largely on the violent acts of the movement's operatives and the movement's Marxist political theory during this time. Less has been written, however, about the movement's development prior to 1967, or the relationship between traditional forms of anti-colonial resistance and tribal violence in Palestinian society and the forms of resistance that manifested within the Palestinian Resistance Movement. This thesis analyzes the development of political critiques and theories on the use of political violence within the organizations of Palestinian Resistance between the *nakba* in 1948 and the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, tracing them back to the traditional sociopolitical structures that regulated authority and tribal violence in Palestine prior to the twentieth century. Due to a variety of economic and political forces

at work in the region, political authority among Arab Palestinians shifted from rural kinship-based networks to urban patronage-based networks between roughly 1858 and 1922. This resulted in a disconnection between those wielding political and economic influence and the population's center of mass, which remained in the rural hinterlands. This dual structure, which ultimately contributed to the failure of nationalist Palestinian leaders to effectively harness peasant anticolonial resistance during the British Mandate to strategic ends, was a central element in the critique of mid-century Palestinian Resistance Movement thinkers, and informed the theories they generated during this time. As an illustration of Palestinian resistance thought during this period, I analyze the content and editorial perspective of *Filasṭīn,* a newspaper published by the Arab Nationalist Movement from 1964 to 1967. Through this newspaper, the ANM clearly articulated a position on Arab government and the use of violence for political ends which remained a major influence in the theories of the movement after 1967.

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine the development of the Palestinian Resistance Movement's political theory prior to the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war, in particular the political structures that it proposed and the use of armed struggle within the movement. I argue that the development of political thought by the movement's leaders during the 1950s and 1960s, particularly regarding the use of violence as a legitimate method of advancing the movement's political objectives, represents a bridge between the region's pre-1948 social structures and the Marxism-inflected terrorist violence that dominated the movement's public personae after 1968.[1] During this period, Palestinian activist intellectuals attempted to formulate a new social framework after the complete disintegration of traditional Palestinian social and political networks that resulted from the *nakba* of 1948-1949. Furthermore, the debates within the movement's factions were part of a process, by which Palestinians after 1948 attempted to analyze the failure of "Palestinian Nationalism" to prevent the seizure of Palestine by Jewish Zionist immigrants in 1948 and to develop theories for moving forward after the disintegration of Palestinian social networks after the *nakba*.

[1] Samir Franjieh analyzed the revolutionary character of the PLFP in 1972, arguing that, while the PFLP sought to act as a revolutionary vanguard, in practice they have (at the time of writing) been unable to create a political awareness among the refugees, who are incorrectly conflated with a Marxists proletariat class because of their marginal economic status. Franjieh also states that, since the leadership of the PFLP comprised of middle-class intellectuals, rather than bona fide proletariat, they are unlikely to be able to overtake *al-Fatah* for the leadership of the movement, or to be able to effectively lead a revolutionary movement, in general. Samir Franjieh, "How Revolutionary Is the Palestinian Resistance? A Marxist Interpretation," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 1, no. 2 (1972): 53, 60.

Starting in the summer of 1968, the dramatic escalation of the Palestinian resistance movement's violence and its shift into international terrorism garnered the attention of the media around the world.[2] In particular, violent acts such as the hijacking of numerous commercial airplanes by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the murder of the 1972 Israeli Olympic Team by the Black September Organization were evidence of an evolution in political violence, and attracted the sympathy and support of numerous dissidents in Europe, Asia, and the Americas.[3] This international network engaged in a guerrilla struggle against "the forces of Imperialism," broadly construed as Israel and those agencies or individuals viewed as supporting its occupation of Palestine.[4] While not immediately apparent to Western observers at the time, there is a clear trajectory between the uses of violence to achieve political objectives in traditional Palestinian society, and the post-1967 terrorism of the organizations of the Palestinian Resistance Movement. While the method of the violent struggle is unique after 1967, the

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[2] Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State : The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 213-214.

[3] Paige Arthur notes that famed French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre defended the actions of the BSO group responsible for the deaths of the 11 Israeli athletes in 1972. Paige Arthur, *Unfinished Projects : Decolonization and the Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre* (London: Verso, 2010), 151. Likewise, Varon details the intellectual affinity between the members of the West German "Rote Armee Fraktion" (Red Army Faction) and the Palestinians. Stefan Aust, details their training in Palestinian camps and collaboration with PFLP and BSO elements to conduct joint operations. Aust Stefan Aust and Anthea Bell, *Baader-Meinhof : The inside Story of the R.A.F* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 66-68; Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home : The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 250-251. In February 1971, two members of the Japanese Red Army traveled to Beirut to establish contact with George Habash and the PFLP. The JRA subsequently maintained close ties to the PFLP, established a Beirut base, and conducted numerous joint operations with the Palestinian group. Shigenobu Fusako, the JRA's later had a daughter with Habash. William Regis Farrell, *Blood and Rage : The Story of the Japanese Red Army*, Lexington Books Issues in Low-Intensity Conflict Series (Lexington, Mass. ; Toronto: Lexington Books, 1990).

[4] Aust and Bell, 19-22, 37; Farrell, 64-65, 73; Varon, 11, 34.

theoretical basis of its application lies in the period between the Palestinian *nakba*, in 1948, and the defeat of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan by Israel in June 1967.

Prior to the nineteenth century, local authority in Palestine was exercised through kinship-based tribal systems, in which rural clan leaders, who wielded great local influence through a mixture of economic control and kinship-based allegiances, employed tribal warfare as a routine element of local politics.[5] This warfare was circumscribed by local custom and conducted to achieve limited strategic objectives or to influence negotiations. Between the 1839 and 1936, a number of processes, both external and internal to the region, led to the growth of a class of urban-based merchants and intellectuals.[6] By the end of World War I, these town-dwellers had come to dominate the region's economy, and therefore its nascent political structures, although the rural leaders maintained a large degree of influence among the peasantry. In this bifurcated political environment, the new urban elite proved incapable of marshaling the rural population of Palestine in support of their efforts to oppose Zionist expansion or to influence policy during the period of British administration of the region after World War I.[7] The fruitlessness of the Palestinians' efforts enabled the rulers of Egypt, Iraq, and

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[5] Issa Khalaf, *Politics in Palestine : Arab Factionalism and Social Disintegration, 1939-1948*, Suny Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 12-13.

[6] Ibid., 11-13; J. Reilly, "The Peasantry of Late Ottoman Palestine," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 10, no. iv (1981): 53.

[7] Yehoshua Porath's encyclopedic 2-part study on the Palestinian nationalist movement during the British Mandate details the creation of political parties and factions by members of the Palestinian urban elite and the struggles of these individuals, most notably Mohammed Hajj Amin al-Husayni, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, to dominate the movement and to exclude rival clans. See Yehoshua Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement, 1918-1929* (London,: Cass, 1974); Yehoshua Porath, *The Palestinian Arab National Movement : From Riots to Rebellion* (London ; Totowa, N.J.: F. Cass, 1977).

Transjordan, driven by their own territorial ambitions, to assume a primary role in the region's determination during the 1940s.[8]

Despite these states' efforts to prevent the Zionists' expansion, in 1948 and 1949 hundreds of Arab Palestinians were killed and thousands expelled from the territory as the state of Israel was established.[9] The exiled survivors, separated from their homes and lands experienced intense trauma and despair and many a desire to undertake violent acts of resistance and revenge within the "occupied" territory. Palestinian and Arab political thinkers and intellectuals analyzed the defeat in the hopes of overcoming the Jewish state and regaining dominance in the region.[10]

While many young Palestinian activists blamed the patronage-based political structure and the selfish ambitions of the Arab states for Israel's victory and the Palestinians' destitution, regime change in Iraq and Egypt during the 1950s made some optimistic that these new military regimes might be more capable and less corrupted by the West than were the old monarchies. Inspired by the theories of Arab Nationalism, a group of these Palestinians allied themselves with the new Egyptian president, Gamal 'abd al-Nasser, convinced that the Arabs could not defeat Israel unless unified, and so

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[8] In the case of Hajj Amin, in particular, his efforts to personally control the national movement caused him to seek the involvement of the Arab states, particularly after being exiled from the region by the British in 1937. Z. Elpeleg and Shmuel Himelstein, *The Grand Mufti : Haj Amin Al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement* (Portland, Or.: Frank Cass, 1993), 56-60.

[9] While not within the scope of this paper, *Filastin* published a number of articles detailing aspects of the 1948 *nakba*. These articles, which focused specifically on violent episodes suffered by the Palestinians, such as Israeli siege of the village of Deir Yassin, echoed the themes of trauma and loss that were central to *Filastin*'s engagement with Palestinian cultural identity, which will be discussed in chapter three of this paper.

[10] George Habash, "Taking Stock: An Interview with George Habash / Mahmoud Soueid," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 28 i, no. 109 (1999): 90; I. S. Lustick, "Changing Rationales for Political Violence in the Arab-Israeli Conflict," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 77, no. 20 i (1990): 66.

achieving that unity must be prioritized before initiating armed struggle against Israel.[11] Others, most notably *al-Fatah*, still critical of the role of the Arab states and traditional Palestinian political structures, committed themselves to immediate guerrilla action against Israel – without being tied to any of the Arab regimes.[12]

The competition between these two camps increased throughout the mid-1960s, as *al-Fatah* and likeminded groups increasingly pressured the nationalists to join their campaign of guerrilla warfare, in the hope of provoking a second war between Israel and the Arab states. Within the nationalist faction, in particular the Arab Nationalist Movement, which was closely tied to al-Nasser, a growing number of the faction's Palestinian militants pressed for a greater level of guerrilla activity.

In the first chapter, I will analyze the political structures of pre-1948 Palestine, and traditional structures of peasant resistance; arguing that sweeping social changes started during the 19th century led to a theoretical disconnect between Palestinian Arab political activity, which came to be based in the urban centers, and the rural masses, who still engaged in traditional forms of resistance against British military and police forces and Zionist settlers.

In chapter two, I will analyze the political perspectives of two generations of politically active Palestinians between 1948 and 1967. While the political notables who wielded authority prior to the *nakba* adhered to pre-1948 patronage-based political models, the next generation – younger Palestinians who became politically mature during

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[11] Habash: 90.

[12] Abu Iyad and Eric Rouleau, *My Home, My Land : A Narrative of the Palestinian Struggle* (New York: Times Books, 1981), 20-21.

the 1950s – attempted to reject this structure. This new generation of politically active Palestinians became divided into two camps. One camp, exemplified by Yasir Arafat's *al-Fatah* rejected pre-1948 notable politics through a critique of the existing Palestinian political system and argued for immediate violent resistance against Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands. The other group, which initially subscribed to a similar critique of the role of patronage-based politics in the Arab states' involvement in Palestine, was impressed by the new regimes that came to power in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq after 1952, in particular the nationalist ideas of Egyptian President Gamal 'abd al-Nasser. These Palestinian activists, typified by George Habash, the founder of the Arab Nationalist Movement (and later the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) also called for guerrilla resistance, but believed that this resistance would ultimately be unsuccessful unless Arabs were able to unify and rectify the factionalism that was responsible for the Arab defeat in 1948. I argue that the leaders of these two factions shared many similarities in background and experience and that the primary distinguishing feature between them was the primacy they placed on armed resistance in the liberation of Palestine. The contention between those who advocated immediate armed resistance, and those who deferred guerrilla warfare until a future time when appropriate conditions were established grew between 1965 and June 1967. This conflict, as we shall see, was not only present within the two major Palestinian factions, but also within the individual groups, themselves. In particular, the Arab Nationalist Movement experienced a prolonged period of near-fragmentation from mid-1966 until after the June 1967 war when, no longer able to reconcile its internal conflicts, the group fragmented.

In the final chapter, I will analyze the content and style of one of the Arab Nationalist Movement's major official newspapers, entitled *Filastin*, which the organization published in Beirut from late-1964 until June 1967. This particular newspaper, in which the ANM responded directly to *al-Fatah* and its calls to armed struggle, clearly demonstrates the ANM's pan-Arab perspective. In addition to *Filastin*'s overt political content, which I will show clearly voiced support for al-Nasser and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, I will examine the way in which the publication advanced complimentary themes through its engagement with elements of Palestinian culture, in particular Palestinian poetry and literature. Through these pieces, *Filastin* made its own contribution to post-*nakba* analysis of the Palestinian condition. Finally, I will examine *Filastin*'s stance on guerrilla warfare throughout the newspaper's publication, which I will argue continued to support Gamal 'abd al-Nasser's official position on guerrilla entanglement with Israel, yet also evolved in response to the growing call for armed action within the resistance movement.

The theories produced by this group of Palestinians between 1948 and 1967 informed their thoughts and actions after the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War, albeit in surprising ways. For those in the *al-Fatah* camp, the experiences during and after the 1967 war apparently confirmed the position they had taken since 1964. The political capital this generated augmented the influence they had garnered through their unceasing support for armed struggle, in particular their victory in March 1968 against the IDF siege of the town of Karama, and enabled them to capture a controlling representation in

the PLO, despite their previous criticism of the organization.[13] As for Habash and the ANM, the ideological exploration prompted by the Arab defeat in 1967 did not cause a change in his views toward the legitimacy of armed struggle, but rather removed the constraints placed upon it by his support of Gamal ‘abd al-Nasser.[14]

[13] Sayigh, 667.

[14] Yezid Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox: The Arab Nationalist Movement, Armed Struggle, and Palestine, 1951-1966," *Middle East Journal* 45, (1991): 618-620.

Chapter 1 – The Shape of Anti-Colonial Resistance in Palestine during the British Mandate

Through a series of economic and sociopolitical transformations that occurred over the course of the nineteenth century, administrative and economic authority in Palestine shifted from the rural *shuyukh* to powerful urban families, radically altering the traditional structures of authority in the region. Despite the transformation of rural society, peasant warfare and resistance to both British forces and Zionist settlers retained distinctly traditional characteristics throughout the British Mandate. While peasant violence retained traditional aspects, the transition of political authority from rural to urban leaders created a disconnect between those recognized by the British to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinian population and those capable of providing direction and structure to peasant resistance. Ultimately, this prevented coordination between the two camps and a lack of orientation or strategy in peasant violence in the decades leading up to 1948.

In this chapter, I argue that the transition of authority, from traditional rural leaders to the developing group of town-based elites eliminated the traditional framework that circumscribed the use of peasant violence in Palestine and had previously provided it with strategic direction. In effect, tribal patterns of warfare continued throughout the Mandatory period, directed against British forces, Zionists, and even other Palestinian Arabs, but without the limitations on its acceptable use and goals that had traditionally been provided by rural leadership.

In this chapter, I will first describe the social and economic structure of Palestinian society at the beginning of the 19th century, and the networks of authority around which it was oriented. I argue that during this time, peasant violence was organized within a rigid framework of custom, which the rural *shuyukh* exercised for specific political objectives. The use of the term "political" in this context is liberal; they engaged in limited warfare for limited gains and to settle local disputes and seldom engaged in protracted military campaigns. Second, I will describe the structural changes Palestinian society experienced as a result of the Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms of the 19th century, and the shift this initiated from a rural dominated society to one in which the center of local authority rested in the urban centers. I argue that this shift in authority removed the traditional constraints from peasant warfare. I will then analyze the Palestinian revolt of 1936-1939, in which I argue the political disconnect between urban and rural centers of authority can be clearly seen and which ultimately prevented the new urban political elite from influencing the widespread peasant unrest to advance their political objectives.

PEASANT LIFE AND THE CENTRALITY OF THE VILLAGE

Palestine remained overwhelmingly agrarian at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ottoman administrative practices in the region from the eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century had resulted in a withdrawal of the peasantry from the much more fertile coast and plains to the rugged and hilly hinterland of the territory in response to

increased Bedouin control of those zones.[15] For defense against the dangerous and uncertain conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian environs, rural society developed a distinctly communal character, in which the center of peasant life was the village. This communalism was reflected in the social and economic institutions that developed in the region and in the structures by which local authority was exercised. The typical Palestinian village was composed of four to five clans or kinship groups (*hamula*, pl. *hama'il*).[16] Within these villages, the profitability of agriculture from year to year strongly encouraged the development of stable systems of land tenure. Through intermarriage and shared narratives of origin, these small hamlets developed a highly cohesive social structure.[17] Additionally, these same economic concerns led the rural population to remain generally static and villages experienced very little in or out migration. This further contributed to village stability and to close relations between the residents.[18] The resulting social structure was so cohesive that, when newcomers did move into a village, they were sometimes forced to create fictitious kinship ties with one of the resident *hama'il* to fully integrate into village life.[19] Palestinian villages were conspicuously self-sufficient, as well, compared to the rest of the Levant and Syria, which further contributed to their insularity by reducing the need for well-developed

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[15] Issa Khalaf, *Politics in Palestine : Arab Factionalism and Social Disintegration, 1939-1948*, Suny Series in the Social and Economic History of the Middle East (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 11-12.
[16] J. Reilly, "The Peasantry of Late Ottoman Palestine," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 10, no. iv (1981): 90.
[17] S. Atran, "Hamula Organisation and Masha'a Tenure in Palestine," *Man* 21, (1986)., discusses the social structure of these villages, in depth, and their ability to withstand outside intervention and land appropriation. Rosemary Sayigh, *Palestinians : From Peasants to Revolutionaries : A People's History*, Middle East Series No 3 (London: Zed Press, 1979), 14.
[18] Reilly: 90.
[19] Ibid.

intra-regional trading or social networks. Although ownership of all land ultimately remained in the hands of the Ottoman Sultan, land usage was administered within the villages through a variety of systems, which varied across the region.[20] Village officials were usually chosen from among the local population and, as previously noted, immigration in or out of villages was uncommon. Diminishing the need for strong regional networks among the peasantry, Palestinian villages were highly self-sufficient, and with the exception of a few towns that produced cash crops for export, typically provided for their own subsistence needs through raising foodstuffs.[21]

Prior to the Ottoman reforms of the second half of the nineteenth century, the center of authority in the village was the *sheikh* (pl. "*shuyukh"*), the leader of a powerful local family that, through its strength, attracted the allegiance of weaker, more vulnerable families needing protection. Over years, these strong families acquired significant wealth and influence, through which they solidified their positions of prominence and authority in the community. In lieu of a strong Ottoman presence, the *sheikh* was responsible for collecting taxes and remitting payments to the appropriate officials, settling local

[20] Land tenure in rural Palestine has been the subject of much research. Many of the studies conflict over the type of administrative arrangement that dominated, but several have been found to have been particularly prevalent. These include *waqf*, in which land was permanently endowed for the support of an institution—generally religious or educational—and *iltizam*, or tax-farming—which were both common across the Ottoman Empire. See Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914* (London ; New York: Methuen, 1981), 35. In Palestine and parts of southern Syria, a significant amount of the arable land was controlled at the village level under a system of cultivation called *musha'* or *mushaa*. In it, a village's holdings were sub-divided into parcels which were distributed between the members of the community, and would then be cultivated communally. Pastoral land was held in common by all of the village's residents. While villagers had no legal claim to the land, the stability of the village population led to the continuous cultivation of the land by the same families over generations, which produced strong feelings of customary rights of tenure. J. Ruedy, "Dynamics of Land Alienation," *Transformation of Palestine* Edited by I. Abu-Lughod., (1971): 123. Also see Ya'akov Firestone, "Crop-Sharing Economics in Mandatory Palestine - Part I," *Middle Eastern Studies* 11, no. 1 (1975); Ya'akov Firestone, "Crop-Sharing Economics in Mandatory Palestine: Part Ii," *Middle Eastern Studies* 11, no. 2 (1975).

[21] Sayigh, 27.

disputes, overseeing the partition of the village's farm land, and represented the community in relations with other villages or Ottoman authorities.[22]

Each of Palestine's eighteen districts, or *nawahi* (s. *nahiya),* was also controlled by the *sheikh* of a powerful clan, who exercised authority over the villages in the *nahiya*. Control over territory and its resources was hotly contested among the Palestine's leading families and *nahiya* dominance frequently shifted between clans as a result of political maneuvering or military action. Like that of the village *shuyukh*, the authority of the leading clans of the *nawahi* was based upon patronage networks which they had built over time through their strength in warfare and ability to provide security to weaker families who allied with them.[23] These local networks were sustained through a system of tribal alliances that extended throughout Syria and Lebanon, which "exercised a powerful influence on the loyalties of Palestinian Arabs"[24] and helped the *shuyukh* preserve their position in the region. By the nineteenth century, dominance of the region rested within a handful of very strong families, which vied with each other for local control. In Jerusalem, for instance, several main families – the Abu Ghush, the Husaynis, the Nashishibis, and the al-Khalidis – vied with each other for dominance.[25] In the seven *nawahi* that constituted the "Jabal Nabulus" area, however clans such as the Tuqans and

[22] Khalaf, 12.
[23] Reilly: 91-92.
[24] Ibid.: 92.
[25] Illan Pappe's two-part study of the ascendance of the Husayni family during the nineteenth and early twentieth century discusses in-depth the family's contestation with other local clans over the leadership of Jerusalem. Ian Pappe, "The Rise and Fall of the Husaynis, 1840-1922 (Part 1)," *Jerusalem Quarterly File* 10, (2000). Also see Reilly: 91-92.

Nimrs were prominent.[26] All kinship groups aligned themselves with either northern (Qays) or southern (Yaman) tribal coalitions through narratives of origin, by which they traced their ancestry through fictive lineages to pre-Islamic Arabia.[27] These clan alliances cut across geographic and religious boundaries and families of the same religion or sect could belong to either camp. However, factional allegiance was flexible, and villages or families could change allegiance if it served their interests, potentially resulting in villages or even families split between the factions. A prominent family, by influencing others to switch allegiance, could expand its client base, increasing its power relative to competing clans and its social and economic dominance in the region.[28]

Due to the degree of their influence over the peasant population and the associated military strength they came to be able to harness, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire determined that, rather than attempt to oppose the power of the *shuyukh*, it would be more beneficial to recognize them officially and to incorporate them into the structure of administration. In an attempt to find local officials "who could collect taxes and remit them on time"[29] the *nawahi shuyukh* were invested with the authority to collect taxes, resolve disputes over land, and provide security in the local area. The result of this was an inherent conflict, in that they depended upon the Ottoman governor for their authority, but upon the peasantry their income. The more

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[26] Miriam Hoexter gives a detailed account of this process in the seven *nawahi* which constituted the "Jabal Nablus" area during the nineteenth century. Miriam Hoexter, "The Role of the Qays and Yaman Factions in Local Political Divisions. Jabal Nāblus Compared with the Judean Hills in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Asian and African Studies (Israel)* 9, (1973). Also Pappe: 30.

[27] Hoexter; Khalaf, 12; Pappe: 29.

[28] Khalaf, 12-13.

[29] D. R. Divine, *Politics and Society in Ottoman Palestine: The Arab Struggle for Survival and Power*, vol. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994 (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 30-31.

skilled were able to balance the economic hardship imposed upon the peasantry, in order to maintain their support, with the demands of the governor, to maintain his appointment.[30]

In the larger towns and cities, Ottoman administrators relied on an additional stratum of native urban elites to influence local politics. Because administrators were dispatched from Istanbul and served short terms—typically a year—the ability of these foreign *valis* and *pashas* to wield any significant local influence was limited. While this was intended by the empire to prevent them from raising sufficient local power to challenge the authority of the empire, this forced them to exercise many of their tasks through the local social and economic elites. These "notables," known collectively as *a'yan*, included not only the heads of large landowning families who had relocated from the villages to the cities, but also religious leaders and merchants who, through their integral roles in local religious and legal institutions these families exercised considerable influence within the urban population.[31]

PATTERNS OF RURAL RESISTANCE IN OTTOMAN PALESTINE

Peasant violence in Ottoman Palestine typically occurred in a specific pattern, and within circumscribed limits.[32] When the *shuyukh* mustered his peasants, either to battle rival factions or in the course of negotiations with Ottoman officials, fighting was conducted according to established traditions regarding the acceptable purposes and

[30] Ibid., 31.
[31] The *a'yan* were defined by Albert Hourani as "those who can play a certain political role as intermediaries between government and people, and… as leaders of the urban population." Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in *The Modern Middle East : A Reader*, ed. Albert Hourani, Philip S. Khoury, and Mary C. Wilson(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 89.
[32] Divine, 50.

scope of armed conflict in order to achieve limited objectives.[33] Elites might muster their supporters to influence negotiations with Ottoman officials, to acquire territory from or challenge a rival family, or in response to an affront to the family's honor, but rarely sought large territorial gains and continued negotiations during periods of violence. Frequently, hostilities ceased when the attacking party had gained the political upper hand or inflicted an appropriate response against the offending party. Because of the need of the peasants to work their fields, fighting occurred only in part of the day and campaigns were generally not conducted during the sowing season. Also, peasants tried to keep the number of casualties to a minimum, as custom dictated that blood payments be made for those killed in battle after the conclusion of hostilities.[34] Rather than suffer long periods of mobilization, peasants mustered for battle would withdraw and return to their fields after spending a "reasonable amount of time" in the battle.[35]

In addition to disputes over territory and taxation, opposition to conscription and disarmament was a major incentive to the Palestinian peasants and their *shuyukh* to revolt.[36] Because Palestinian society was both kinship-based and agrarian, long-term conscription and protracted warfare were particularly hazardous to the peasants, as they not only impacted crop production in the short-term, but the loss of a family's sons could

[33] Ibid.
[34] Hoexter: 292.
[35] Divine, 51.
[36] Ibid., 53-73. Khaled M. Safi, "Territorial Awareness in the 1834 Palestinian Revolt," in *Temps Et Espaces En Palestine: Flux Et Résistances Identitaires. Of Times and Spaces in Palestine: The Flows and Resistances of Identity. Sous La Dir. De Roger Heacock*(Beirut: Institut Français du Proche-Orient, 2008), Accessed at http://ifpo.revues.org/483 on 11/09/2011. Para. 11.

endanger the survival of the clan.[37] Furthermore, unlike in traditional tribal warfare, where peasants fought alongside family members under the leadership of local elites, none of the traditional ties of patronage existed between the Palestinians and the military officials whom they served when conscripted.[38] One example of this is the Palestinian revolt in 1834 against the Egyptian occupation under Ismael Pasha, which lasted from 1831 to 1840. In response to increasing taxes and efforts by the Egyptians to simultaneously disarm and conscript the local population, Palestinians across the region rebelled, engaging in mountain ambushes and hit-and-run attacks against Egyptian military units in order to offset their technological advantage.[39] By June, the rebels dominated all of Palestine but the major cities and even infiltrated and captured Jerusalem, forcing the Egyptian forces there to take refuge in the citadel. [40] Ultimately, Mohammed Ali mounted a violent counterattack to break the revolt with reinforcements from Egypt. The Egyptians destroyed entire villages, demolishing the homes of the rich and burning those of the poor as they pursued the Palestinians who continued the revolt—rich and poor. Many leaders were either exiled or executed.[41]

RURAL EFFECTS OF REFORM

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, demand for Palestinian products abroad caused an increase in trade and in the importance of the towns, particularly in the

[37] Safi, Para. 11.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Divine, 59.
[40] Safi, Accessed at http://ifpo.revues.org/483 on 11/09/2011.
[41] Divine, 61.

coastal region, prompting Istanbul to attempt to strengthen its authority over its provinces in an effort to improve the consistency of dwindling and unreliable tax payments. Despite the relative inconsistency of Ottoman authority in Palestine, the increasing economic production of the region's trade strengthened the Ottoman governors, allowing them to increase their military reach into the rural areas and to more directly challenge to power of the traditional elite families.[42] By the beginning of the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Ottoman authority had been consolidated in the larger towns and Ottoman military forces were successfully expanding the amount of terrain that could be securely occupied and cultivated by the peasants, allowing increased inhabitation and exploitation of the fertile plains.[43]

This consolidation set the stage for the Ottoman Empire to enact a series of reforms over the remainder of the century known collectively as the *Tanzimat*. These measures were intended to modernize the empire and to bring its subjects—the vast majority of whom were unpropertied peasants—more directly under Istanbul's control.[44] Instituted in 1839 due to growing concern in Istanbul of being outstripped by the economic and military power of post-Industrial Revolution Europe, the reforms of the *Tanzimat* introduced modern economic systems and technological infrastructure, as well as modern bureaucratic and administrative institutions modeled on those of Europe.

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[42] Ibid., 53.

[43] Reilly: 94. Egypt's occupation from 1831 to 1840 is an element of this transition, which Divine covers in detail. Ottoman consolidation of control over Palestine began early in the century. During the Egyptian occupation, the Ottoman sultan lost much direct control over the region, though it remained officially in Ottoman hands; the occupying forces under Ismael Pasha continued the payment of taxes to Istanbul and the Sultan continued to appoint judges and minor administrators to Palestinian posts. Divine, 53-73.

[44] Divine, 30-31.

Additionally, as an increasing number of the empire's subject groups appeared inclined to seek increased autonomy, or independence as in the case of the Greeks in the 1820s, these reforms sought to tie the empire's population together more directly. In particular, the empire hoped to reach out to its non-Muslims and rural peasants, whose ties of allegiance to local leaders were much stronger than those to the Sultan. Specific reforms included in the Ottoman project included the introduction of paper currency, the post office, the telegraph and railroad, the abolition of slavery, and the removal of special legal and tax status based on religious affiliation. By the time of entrance of the Ottomans into World War One in 1914, these changes had resulted in a dramatic restructuring of the social and economic organization of rural Palestine. While the program was initiated in 1839, the reforms did not begin to be implemented in Palestine until after the restoration of the area to Ottoman control in November 1840.

A main pillar of the *Tanzimat* was a set of initiatives targeting the military and social authority of the *shuyukh*, which was a direct challenge to the empire's centralizing efforts. Central to this was attacking the economic basis of the *shuyukh*'s authority—their role as rural tax collectors. After an initial unsuccessful attempt to collect taxes directly from the peasants, the empire instead transferred the duty to newly-formed district councils, composed of members of the *a'yan*, who then granted the office of tax collector to the highest bidder. This gradually led to the removal of the function of tax collector from the rural *shuyukh*, who were not able to stand up to the competition of the *a'yan*.[45]

[45] Yehoshua Porath, "The Political Awakening of the Palestinian Arabs and Their Leadership Towards the End of the Ottoman Period," in *Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period. Ed. Moshe*

In 1858, the Sultan enacted a further measure intended to break the long-standing ties of patronage between provincial elites and peasants. Through the Land Law of 1858, the Sultan hoped to create a patronage relationship directly between himself and the peasantry, by allowing peasants to register direct ownership of their land, thereby circumventing the local *shuyukh* and intermediaries previously responsible for tax collection. The Vilayet Law of 1864 targeted the administrative authority of the rural shuyukh, by creating a new administrative post at the village level—that of the *mukhtar*—which was intended to replace the *sheikh* as the intermediary between the government and the peasantry. Despite their changing role in the local community, and decrease in administrative power, the social status of the *shuyukh* remained strong, as did their local influence. The *shuyukh* continued to represent the peasants in dealings with the political world outside the village, even into the twentieth century.[46]

As the Ottoman reforms eroded the *shuyukh*'s privileges and traditional bases of authority, the *a'yan* utilized their position in the Ottoman administration to strengthen their own standing. Through their dominance of the district councils, the *a'yan* were able control the implementation of Ottoman reform measures and to defeat attempts by the Ottoman administrators to check the growth of their influence.[47] In addition to replacing the rural *shuyukh* in the role of tax collector, throughout the last third of the nineteenth century the *a'yan* were able to manipulate the registration of land under the law of 1858

Ma'oz(Jerusalem: Magnes Press, for the Hebrew University Institute of Asian and African Studies, Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1975), 362.

[46] Yehoshua Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement, 1918-1929* (London,: Cass, 1974), 9-11.

[47] Khalaf, 15.

in order to accumulate vast estates. Confident that their traditional rights of tenure were secure, Palestinian peasants saw no need to register the land they had cultivated for generations and were hesitant to expose themselves to greater government scrutiny due to fear of more conscription and greater taxation. Instead of registering land in their own names, what land they did register they preferred to do so in the names of the local elites upon whom they traditionally relied for protection. Rather than ensure that land was registered in the cultivators' names, the *a'yan* were able to register significant amounts of land in their own names. Through this process, the *a'yan* were able to acquire the title to the lands from which they collected taxes. Following the Law of 1867, which changed the payment of taxes from cash from kind, the peasants came became increasingly indebted to their new landlords, enabling the *a'yan* to further expand their holdings.[48] This process continued until the Ottoman defeat in World War One brought Palestine under British administration.

PALESTINIAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT DURING THE EARLY MANDATE

The abrupt dismemberment of the six-century-old Ottoman Empire after its defeat in World War One fundamentally changed the political topography of the entire Middle East.[49] The British administration of Palestine, authorized by the League of Nations, was radically different from that of the Ottoman Empire from its inception. First, pursuant to the Balfour Declaration, by which Britain had pledged to support the creation of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine, the British administration was politically constrained to

[48] Ibid., 15-16.
[49] Ibid., 15.

support a growing number of Jewish immigrants to the region. These immigrants, known as the Zionists, began immigrating from Europe in the late 19th century, and despite Ottoman efforts to limit the flow Jews into the country in response to Arab opposition, by 1922 the Jewish population of the region had grown from approximately 24,000 in 1822 to 60,000.[50] A great deal of the British's efforts were invested in mediating between the Palestinian Arabs and this community, called the *Yishuv*, particularly as Palestinian Arab opposition to the growing Zionist population became increasingly violent throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

Second, while the British were committed, in principle, to maintaining the traditional structure of Arab life in Palestine, the region's history belied this as a legitimate objective.[51] As the region had never before existed as a single polity, the construction of boundaries and the reorganization of the territory within in relation to itself necessarily created a new political reality. Furthermore, the British based their legal framework upon existing Ottoman laws, which had been administered with a great deal of flexibility and imprecision by the Empire, rather than the prevailing socio-political traditions of the region's inhabitants.[52] Like previous foreign powers who had ruled Palestine, the British accepted the urban elite as the representatives of the Palestinian people, strengthening the powerful urban families by giving them positions of responsibility on representative councils and official civil and religious posts. By the

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[50] J. L. Abu-Lughod, "The Demographic Transformation of Palestine," *Transformation of Palestine* Edited by I. Abu-Lughod., (1971): 140-141.
[51] Ylana N. Miller, "Administrative Policy in Rural Palesting: The Impact of British Norms on Arab Community Life, 1920-1948," in *Palestinian Society and Politics*, ed. Joel S. Migdal(Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), 125-126.
[52] Khalaf, 31-32.

1920s, the most prominent of these were the Husaynis and the Nashishibis, who had come to dominate Jerusalemite politics and occupied the most important Arab positions, such as the city's mayor and the Grand Mufti, responsible for overseeing the city's many religious endowments.[53] These two families also quickly dominated the regional parties and coalitions that arose during the 1920s and 1930s.[54] The first such body, a 24-member council formed by the Palestinian Arab Congress in 1920, was quickly dominated by the Husaynis. This control over the new Palestinian political environment was buttressed when Hajj Amin Husayni was made Grand Mufti and head of the Supreme Muslim Council.[55] In an effort to offset the Husaynis' political dominance, Raghib al-Nashashibi, head of the Nashashibi clan, formed the National Muslim Societies. These two organizations formed the core of Palestinian politics until the 1940s, and the early factionalism they demonstrated would remain the rule in the Palestinian national struggle until the Arab defeat in 1948.[56]

PEASANT VIOLENCE OF THE MANDATE

Peasant violence increased during the Mandate in response to both the British occupation and increasing Arab anger over the growing Zionist presence in Palestine,

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[53] There are numerous studies devoted to the role of these two families in the politics of mandatory Palestine. Pappe: 37; Ilan Pappe, "The Husayni Family Faces New Challenges: Tanzimat, Young Turks, the Europeans and Zionism, 1840-1922. Part Ii," *Jerusalem Quarterly File* 11-12, (2001): 59. Hajj Amin al-Husayni, in particular rose to prominence through his election to the position of Grand Mufti in 1921 after the death of his brother, the previous Grand Mufti. See Z. Elpeleg and Shmuel Himelstein, *The Grand Mufti : Haj Amin Al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement* (Portland, Or.: Frank Cass, 1993).

[54] David Waines, "The Failure of the National Resistance," in *The Transformation of Palestine; Essays on the Origin and Development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, ed. Ibrahim A. Abu-Lughod(Evanston Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 220-222.

[55] Ibid., 221.

[56] Ibid.

who by 1931 had increased to 174,006.[57] These Jews, only half of whom had been born in Palestine, were largely concentrated in the urban centers of Jerusalem and Jaffa, where they became an important element in the region's trading and commercial sectors.[58] In the hinterlands, the Zionists were able to acquire land, largely from Arab landlords. These landlords, urban dwellers who had acquired rural estates through manipulation of the Ottoman land reforms, sold their holdings to Jewish immigrant, displacing the peasants who had worked the land for generations, and leading to a growing number of displaced rural Palestinians.[59] Peasant resistance against British occupation began almost immediately, and the early years of the occupation experienced a series of violent disturbances, most of which began in the urban areas, then spreading to the countryside. In the 1930s, Palestinian unrest shifted to focus on the countryside, culminating in the Palestinian Revolt of 1936-39.

The first major incidents after the beginning of the British occupation of Palestine occurred in the spring of 1920. After a minor conflict over land in northern Galilee in March of that year, increasing anger among Jerusalemite Arabs over the Balfour Declaration erupted into rioting and attacks against Jews in Jerusalem's Old City in April. The violence remained contained and was condemned by the Palestinian political leaders as being counterproductive in their attempts to gain influence with the British administrators. The following year, in Jaffa, police attempting to quiet a disturbance between Jewish labor factions triggered Arab rioting and attacks against Jewish business

[57] Abu-Lughod: 144.
[58] Ibid.: 147.
[59] Ruedy: 129.

and pedestrians, which quickly spread to the countryside. By the second day of the rioting, 40 Jews had been killed. Over the next five days, the violence spread to the surrounding villages, as rumors of Jewish reprisal attacks touched off successive waves of renewed fighting. In Nablus, for instance, an assembly of three thousand Arab peasants and Bedouin in Nablus was only prevented from moving in defense of nearby Tulkarm, reportedly under Jewish attack, by the intervention of local notables. In other towns, such as Ramlah and Jerusalem, local elites such as al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Jerusalem mayor Raghib al-Nashashibi were able to prevent violent demonstrations.

In August 1929, large-scale peasant violence again broke out, stemming from a confessional conflict in Jerusalem, but rapidly spreading outside the city to the rural community. An important religious site to both Jews and Muslims, during the mandate period, the Wailing Wall became a heated political issue as Jews sought to expand their rights at the site, and Muslims, led by al-Hajj Amin al-Hussayni, sought to prevent Jewish control of the site. On 21 August, 1929, following the destruction of Jewish religious paraphernalia at the sight during the week prior, attendees of a Jewish funeral staged a protest against the British government and the Arabs, which was followed by additional provocative behavior by both factions. After an inflammatory speech by a rival of al-Hajj Amin during Friday prayers on 23 August, enraged congregates moved to the Jewish quarter and began attacking residents at random. As the fighting moved to the countryside, peasants destroyed four Jewish settlements, and attacked others, but were rebutted by the Jewish defenders. In Hebron, sixty Jewish residents were killed, and in

Safad, whose Jewish population predated Zionist immigration, Arab rebels killed twenty.[60]

The Wailing Wall incident signaled a change in the nature of resistance violence in Palestine. Beyond the geographical spread of the conflict to areas previously not involved in the sectarian violence, such as Safad, there were serious political ramifications, as well. Despite a condemnation of the attacks issued by the Arab Executive and endorsed by al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni, indicated to the British that the Arabs were not capable of self-government and to the Jews that political resolution with the Arab Palestinians was impossible. On the other hand, the outbreak demonstrated the volatility of the Palestinian masses as well as their "revolutionary potential."[61] A further significant outcome is the increase, after 1929, of grassroots organization within the Palestinian population.

In the period from 1929 to 1935, numerous resistance groups formed in both urban and rural Palestine. In the cities, local political committees formed to organize the urban population. These organizations, local chapters of the national committee under the leadership of al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni, attempted to direct the political activity of the urban masses. In the countryside, numerous armed gangs and guerrilla groups formed throughout Palestine, under the leadership of various *shuyukh* and warlords who infiltrated Palestine from Syria and Iraq. These bands engaged in assorted acts of robbery, harassment, and low-grade terrorism throughout the early 1930s. While the

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[60] Ann Mosely Lesch, *Arab Politics in Palestine, 1917-1939 : The Frustration of a Nationalist Movement*, The Modern Middle East Series (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979), 211.
[61] Waines, 226.

activity of these groups did amount to a growing insurgency, their activity was of only minor regional significance until 1935 and the death of Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam.

In the 1920s, Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam, an Azharite scholar and influential leader in the Islamic community of Haifa, began establishing secret guerrilla cells, which conducted reconnaissance operations and small attacks in the area throughout the decade. Preaching self-sufficiency, humility, courage, and the willingness to sacrifice for the cause, al-Qassam had undertaken an Islamic revival in his hometown of Jebla, in southern Syria, during the last decade of the Ottoman Empire, and attempted to lead a *jihad* against the Italian occupation of Tripoli in 1912, only to be turned back in Alexandria.[62] After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, al-Qassam formed a militia to defend Jebla against Alawite gangs and French forces consolidating control over the area. In 1920, al-Qassam fled Syria, settling in Haifa where he taught at the Madrasa Islamiya, became president of the Young Men's Muslim Association, and held a variety of religious positions in the community. In Haifa, al-Qassam attracted a following among the rapidly growing urban poor, many of whom had been dispossessed of their land by Zionist settlers. Al-Qassam provided them education, using the Quran as his textbook, emphasizing the importance of social values and martyrdom. Despite being arrested by the British for publicly preaching *jihad*, during the 1920s, Al-Qassam was able to build a cellular group of *mujahidin*, numbering between 50 and 200, concentrated in northern

[62] S. Abdullah Schleifer, "The Life and Thought of 'Izz-Id-Din Al-Qassam," in *Arab-Israeli Relations : Historical Background and Origins of the Conflict*, ed. Ian Lustick(New York: Garland, 1994), 327-9.

Palestine.[63] In November 1935, al-Qassam decided the time was ripe for revolt against the British, and approached al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni for support. Despite being rejected by al-Hajj Amin, who believed that such action would alienate the British government while providing no gain, al-Qassam goes forward with his plan, but is killed near Jenin before initiating conducting any attacks.

Despite the lack of substantive gains created by his movement, thousands of mourners attended al-Qassam's funeral and he immediately become an icon for the Palestinian resistance against the British and Zionists. The following April, surviving members of his band killed two Jews in the course of a robbery, to which the Jewish community near Tel Aviv responded by attacking Arabs, including killing several workers near Petah Tiqvah.[64] The Arab middle class and merchants of Jaffa instituted a strike, which spread through the other Palestinian towns, although Arab peasant participation was very small.[65] A week later, al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni and several other prominent Palestinian leaders gave their support to the strike and formed a body, the Higher Arab Committee, to coordinate strikes between towns and attempt negotiations with the British. The strike rapidly escalated into violence, which spread rapidly throughout Palestine. In the cities, mobs demonstrated and attacked Jewish businesses and residential areas, including the destruction of Jewish neighborhoods in Jaffa, blocking streets with nails and debris, arson, damaging Jewish businesses, and sniping at

[63] Ibid., 339.
[64] Lesch, 217.
[65] Yehoshua Porath, *The Palestinian Arab National Movement : From Riots to Rebellion* (London ; Totowa, N.J.: F. Cass, 1977), 168.

police patrols. The police responded in kind, injuring protestors and destroying a quarter of Jaffa's Old City in mid-June.

The urban hostility of the strike quickly spread to the rural areas, where the violence became much more widespread. Starting in May, guerrilla bands began to form in the hills around the country. In June, they had their first engagement with British troops, when sixty Arabs from Nablus ambushed a military convoy. Other guerrilla bands formed, by September numbering between one and two thousand, including 300 foreign fighters led by Syrian exile Fawzi al-Quaqji.[66] The guerrillas conducted attacks against police and military patrols and targeted Jewish settlements, destroying crops, uprooting trees, and sniping at communities from the hills. The gangs also staged attacks against infrastructure, including derailing trains and cutting telephone and telegraph lines. In response to the Arab guerrillas, the British fielded 20,000 troops, augmented by Royal Air Force spotting aircraft.

As the economic impact of the strike on Palestinian Arabs increased, conflict over the strike grew within the urban communities, resulting in the assassination of the Haifa committee president, forcing the Higher Arab Committee to request assistance from the kings of Egypt, Transjordan, and Iraq, who intervened with the British to open negotiations. The Higher Arab Committee ended the strike in mid-October, without obtaining any political concessions from the British. The Palestinian guerrillas melted back into the population and in late November the British allowed the foreign militants to slip across the border out of Palestine and into Syria.

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[66] Lesch, 220.

Over the winter and spring of 1937, the conflict smoldered, with periodic incidents of violence. Throughout the year there were sporadic attacks against the Jewish population, and against Palestinians viewed as being unsupportive or insufficiently supportive of the guerrillas. In July 1937, another wave of violence followed the announcement by the British of a plan to partition the territory into Arab and Zionist areas, and in September, the latent insurgency reached a climax when the British district commissioner for Galilee was assassinated. As the highest ranking British official killed in the conflict, the British viewed the attack as a challenge to their authority in the region and responded by rounding up political activists throughout the district and by banning the Higher Arab Committee. Two weeks later, violence erupted again in earnest.

Guerrilla bands quickly formed in the hills across Palestine, particularly in the northern and southern mountains around Hebron. Early attacks resembled those of 1936, including sniper attacks, cutting telephone and telegraph wires, and destroying crops, but by March the violence had outstripped that of the earlier revolt. From October 1936 until the summer of 1937, the guerrillas, who the British had allowed to remain at large after the end of the strike, had been able to develop their tactics and organization.[67] In March 1938, between three and four hundred guerrillas faced two thousand British soldiers and police near Umm al-Fahum, suffering heavy casualties. Guerrillas in the central towns of Ramallah, Beersheba, and Gaza conducted raids of banks and government offices to obtain funds and additional weapons and ammunition.

[67] Tom Bowden, "The Politics of the Arab Rebellion in Palestine, 1936-39," *Middle Eastern Studies* 11, no. 2 (1975): 152.

In his analysis of the 1936-1939 revolt, Tom Bowden observes that Palestinian guerrilla groups formed in a fairly consistent pattern.[68] Typically, groups began as small, poorly-organized bands, composed of individuals affiliated by their common local origin. Armed with knives, clubs, and a few firearms—from WWI, or older—these gangs generally limited their activity to robbery and minor acts of terrorism. While militarily weak, their mobility and small footprint enabled them to avoid capture, attracting more followers.[69] As groups gained strength and notoriety through continued successful operations, often several groups would combine together into a single larger group, which, though able to achieve more decisive results in battle, were also easier for the British forces to track and engage.

Bowden further distinguishes between the urban and the rural as two distinct categories of resistance in the revolt. While the revolt initially consisted of both intellectual, or political, and operative components—the intellectual being almost exclusively in the urban milieu—as the revolt progressed after 1936, the men of violence came to dominate the revolt in both the urban and rural environments.[70] Across the region, guerrilla gangs dominated towns and villages, and even portions of the major cities, including Jaffa and Jerusalem, which was under the control of the rebels for several months.

In October 1937, the British transferred troops from Europe to supplement its existing forces and began deliberate clearing and counterguerrilla operations. Over the

[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.: 157-8.
[70] Ibid.: 159.

next several months, the British recaptured Jerusalem and other major towns and restored damaged transportation and communication infrastructure. Through collective fines and punitive measures, the British pressured villages to halt their assistance of the guerrillas, eroding the guerrillas' support base. As conditions became progressively more austere for the gangs, they increasingly resorted to extortion and force to acquire provisions from the rural population, further alienating their peasant sponsors.

Throughout the revolt, the violence of peasant groups retained a distinctly traditional character, in many ways more similar to the tribally-oriented conflict of nineteenth century Ottoman Syria than peasant revolutions of the early twentieth century. As we have already seen, the basic foundation of gang formation consisted of individuals acquainted through local affiliation, and bands were organized under the leadership of strong individuals. Both of these features are modern reflections of traditional peasant martial organization. While the guerrillas of the 1930s became more mobile than their earlier forebears, they were nonetheless still tied to their villages and communities in the countryside for shelter and material support.

Of perhaps greater significance than its mechanical similarity to rural conflict in Palestine prior to and during the nineteenth century, the peasant violence of the 1936-39 revolt also maintained significant tactical and ideological similarities to traditional peasant resistance, but with clear evidence of the influence of the socio-political changes experienced by the population over the previous century. Palestinian guerrillas during the revolt relied heavily upon hit-and-run tactics, utilizing the rugged, hilly terrain to offset the numerical and technological advantages of the British military and police forces, just

as their predecessors had against Ottoman and Egyptian troops in previous battles. Similarly, rural insurgents exploited their connection with, and ability to blend into the village population for both sustainment, and to avoid capture by their enemies and – during periods of calm—were able to return to village life. At times, for instance during the general strike of 1936, the peasants would temporarily abandon martial activities in order to complete critical agricultural tasks in season, such as time-sensitive planting or harvesting.

Despite the vestiges of patterns of earlier peasant resistance still apparent in mandatory Palestine, the socio-political changes that had occurred in Palestinian society by 1936 fundamentally affected the *strategy* of martial activity in the region. The farthest-reaching effect of this is the void created between those who wielded political authority and those who conducted the various acts of violent resistance as the seat of authority shifted from the rural *shuyukh* to the urban *a'yan*. Despite the dominance of the *a'yan* over negotiations with the British, the rural *shuyukh* maintained significant influence over the village populations. During the various activities of 1936-1939, this resulted in parallel sets of uncoordinated operations. As the urban leaders, led by the political elite of Jerusalem, attempted to conduct negotiations with the mandatory authorities, rural militias conducted raids and assassinations with no political objective or, with the exception of the Islamic *jihad* of Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam, no theoretical basis to guide their actions. Beyond being simply absent of political strategy or theory, the peasant violence of the mandatory period evidenced strong intergroup rivalry and competition reminiscent of the tribal violence of the Qays and Yaman coalitions. For

example, in addition to harassing British patrols, the Abu Dura and Zuumi families of northern Palestine attacked each other's villages.[71]A number of Palestinians, including the president of the Haifa strike, mentioned previously, and many of al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni's political opponents,[72] fell victim to assassination by the rebels alongside British administrators such as the district commissioner for Galilee and the acting district commissioner of Jenin in the summer of 1938. In fact, according to Bowden, the number of Arab killed by Arabs during the revolt, 494, was almost equal to the number of Jews killed by Arabs, 547.[73] Rather than limited warfare to create a favorable position from which to conduct negotiations, the violence—both rural and urban—was uncontrolled and aimless. The directionless, self-interested, character that predominated in the activity of the guerrillas further illustrates the effects of the lack of strong political networks between those who had come to wield political influence in the urban environment and those who still commanded social and familial influence in the rural environment. Ultimately, this gap prevented either group from achieving any political accommodation from the British. The urban politicians, while able to direct the activity of the urban masses to a degree, were unable to influence the much more widespread resistance outside of the cities to support their negotiations with the British. Likewise, the rural peasants, frustrated by social and economic conditions in the countryside, were unable to find a politically-influential mouthpiece through which to voice their interests.

[71] Lesch, 224.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Bowden: 147.

CONCLUSION

As the revolt lost momentum in late 1938 and the British counterguerrilla campaign continued to place pressure on those rebels still operating, gradually recapturing territory and causing many of the leaders to flee Palestine for Damascus. In the spring of 1939, the British published a White Paper that limited Jewish migration and the sale of Arab lands to Jews, and committing to the independence of the region as a jointly Jewish-Arab governed state within ten-years' time, which met with vehement rejection by both the Palestinian Arabs and the Zionists. The ability of the Palestinian Arabs to influence the British politically had been severely reduced by the hostilities of 1935-1939.[74] In addition to the damage caused to the indigenous political elite by numerous assassinations and the exile of al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who continued to attempt to conduct negotiations on behalf of Palestine during his exile, the entrance of the non-Palestinian Arab monarchs of Egypt, Iraq, and Transjordan during the General Strike of 1936 initiated a new phase in the ongoing contestation over the region.[75] While the Grand Mufti sought to gain support of the Axis powers for a post-war Arab Palestine, in fear of losing its Middle Eastern allies, Britain moved closer to the Arab states. Throughout the remainder of the 1940s, the Palestinians increasingly relied on their neighbor states to rescue them from the threat of the Zionists, first for their influence with the British, then, after the creation of the Arab league and the end of the war, for a military solution. While the *Yishuv* continued to organize itself politically and develop

[74] Elpeleg and Himelstein, 54-55.
[75] Barry M. Rubin, *The Arab States and the Palestine Conflict*, 1st ed., Contemporary Issues in the Middle East (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1981), 12-17.

itself militarily throughout the 1940s, the Palestinians failed to overcome their established social divisions. Thus, in 1948, when the Arab states were defeated as they attempted to prevent the creation of the Israeli state, the Palestinians were left without a champion capable of exerting any decisive influence on their behalf and were forced to seek a new political direction.

Chapter 2 – The Formation of Political Ideology in the Palestinian Resistance between 1948 and 1967

From the perspective of the generation of Palestinians who coming of age in the period immediately surrounding the *nakba*, the loss of Palestine to Israel necessitated an intellectual reformulation and the development of new historical narratives of the period leading up to 1948. The intellectual approach taken by these young Palestinians, most of whom were engaged in university studies or in late adolescence in 1948, can be broadly grouped into two trends. The first, exemplified by Yasir Arafat and al-*Fatah*, rejected the system of notable politics that dominated Arab Palestinian politics prior to 1948 and proposed violent struggle, primarily in the form of guerrilla warfare, without the patronage of any of the Arab states—which they believed wanted to weaken and control the resistance movement to suit their own ends. The second camp, typified most notably in the 1950s and 1960s by George Habash and the Arab Nationalist Movement, also called for guerrilla opposition to Israel, but believed that the liberation of Palestine could only be accomplished by first establishing pan-Arab unity. Prior to 1967, this camp subordinated its call for violent action to efforts to foster for pan-Arab unity, primarily under the banner of Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasser.

This chapter will examine the political development of the Palestinian resistance between 1948 and 1967. I will first discuss the political projects of the generation of Palestinians who exercised political authority immediately prior to the *nakba*, most notably Mohammed Hajj Amin al-Husayni. For these pre-1948 Palestinian political elite, the Israeli victory did not demand a fundamental reevaluation of the traditional political

structure, but rather the development of ties to stronger and more influential patrons, found in the form of the Arab states. I will then define the generation of Palestinians who rose to positions of political prominence in the following two decades and discuss the similarities in their backgrounds, demography and education, which contributed to a similar sociopolitical outlook within the group and a shared historical narrative of the *nakba*. Finally, I will discuss the ideological development of the two major divisions of the group, characterized by the Arab Nationalist Movement and *Fatah* during the 1950s and 1960s, leading up to the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war. While *Fatah* remained relatively constant in its core beliefs during this period, throughout the 1960s, the ANM experienced increasing conflict within its ranks over the priority given the liberation of Palestine, which ultimately would cause it to fracture and to seek a new theoretical foundation after 1967.

CONTINUITY OF PALESTINIAN POLITICAL STRUCTURES AFTER 1948

The transformation of Palestinian society in 1948 abruptly ended traditional political networks and generations-old patronage relationships among the Arab population, as thousands left their homes to become refugees, both elsewhere within the region and abroad. While Rosemary Sayigh notes that many of the existing social hierarchies remained intact in the refugee camps as groups tended to relocate together,[76] the *nakba* disrupted normal generational political turnover. Rather than the usual trajectory, by which young adults enter the local economic and political institutions of

[76] Rosemary Sayigh, *Palestinians : From Peasants to Revolutionaries : A People's History*, Middle East Series No 3 (London: Zed Press, 1979).

society, over time replacing the preceding generation, the *nakba* had the effect of preserving the influence of a small number of Palestinian leaders while simultaneously obliterating the aspirations and expectations of a generation of young adults.

The older generation, those Arab Palestinians who occupied positions of political and social authority prior to 1948, was fully a product of the political structure of Palestine, which—as noted in the previous chapter—was based on a variety of patronage networks, and closely tied to family-oriented social hierarchies. For the few members of this group who retained influence subsequent to 1948, the same notions of power and authority remained salient and the pre-1948 Palestinian political structure was not held to blame for the Israeli victory. Rather, as the case of Mohammed Hajj Amin al-Husayni shows, these individuals attempted to maintain their influence in Palestinian politics through relationships with the Arab states, each of which sought to manipulate the situation to serve its own strategic ends.[77] Hajj Amin's case serves as a particularly telling example of this group's efforts to resurrect traditional authority relationships in response to the post-1948 political realities in the region. From 1948 until the formation of the PLO in 1963, which effectively ended his political career, Hajj Amin consistently opposed any political body proposed which might threaten his role as champion of Palestinian nationalism.[78] During this period, he alternately sought to build favorable

[77] Barry M. Rubin, *The Arab States and the Palestine Conflict*, 1st ed., Contemporary Issues in the Middle East (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1981). Rubin notes that, from the perspective of the Arab states, concerns over the "Palestinian issue" remained largely constant throughout the years immediately before and after 1948. Popular support for the Palestinians forced Arab regimes to adopt militant public postures and to engage in wars for which they were unprepared.

[78] Z. Elpeleg and Shmuel Himelstein, *The Grand Mufti : Haj Amin Al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement* (Portland, Or.: Frank Cass, 1993), 124, 134, 145.

relations with the rulers of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq, playing regional rivalries off one another in order to find official backing for his leadership of the Palestinians. Starting in 1960, he even began to attempt reconciliation with his long-time foe King Husayn of Transjordan, as both opposed the Arab League's proposed creation of a Palestinian entity in the West Bank.[79] His failure to prevent the establishment of the PLO, from which he was subsequently excluded, led him afterward to ally with *Fatah*, which shared his distrust of Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasser, but also signaled the beginning of his ultimate political decline,[80] as Ahmed Shukairy was selected as the PLO's chairman.

While not a political elite of Hajj Amin's caste prior to the *nakba*, Shukairy—who not only chaired the PLO from its creation until his resignation following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, but also played a major role in its creation, represents the traditional upper- and middle-classes of pre-1948 Palestine. An influential lawyer in Palestine during the Mandate, Shukairy was born in 1908 to a Turkish mother and Arab father—who was active in the politics of the late Ottoman Empire. In 1948 he briefly held a position in the All-Palestine Government, before evacuating to Beirut. Between 1948 and 1964, Shukairy held a variety of political appointments in several of the Arab states. During the following decade-and-a-half, he held positions of Syrian delegate to the United Nations, the Assistant Secretary General for the Arab League, and a variety of other appointments. Additionally, he was legal counsel and minister for UN affairs for Saudi Arabic from 1957 until 1963, when he lost the favor of Saudi foreign minister and crown prince

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[79] Moshe Shemesh, *The Palestinian Entity, 1959-1974 : Arab Politics and the Plo*, 2nd rev. ed. (London ; Portland, OR: Frank Cass & Co., 1996), 28-29.
[80] Elpeleg and Himelstein, 145.

Faisal.[81] At Nasser's request, Shukairy was appointed as the Palestinian representative to the Arab League in 1963, when the standing delegate died.[82] Following this appointment, he undertook an aggressive campaign among the Arab heads of state for the creation of a Palestinian national organization, which came to fruition in 1964 in the form of the PLO.

While of distinctly different backgrounds and biographies, Hajj Amin al-Husayni and Ahmed Shukairy represent two elements of the same political reality. Both products of the traditional Palestinian political milieu, in the years after 1948 (and in the case of Hajj Amin, the years leading up to the *nakba*, as well) each sought to further both the cause of the Palestinian people and his own political aspirations through political ties to the leaders of the Arab states, which in effect replaced the traditional patronage networks of Ottoman Palestine. In much the same way that earlier generations of Palestinian tribal elites switched allegiance as benefitted the current conditions, the political elite of the post-*nakba* period exploited Arab Cold War politics and national rivalries.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF PALESTINIAN POLITICAL ACTORS

In stark contrast to this group stands the generation of Palestinians who rose to prominence through the Palestinian resistance movement between 1948 and 1967. In young adulthood or late adolescence in 1948, these individuals had expectations for their live and futures, which events of the *nakba* abruptly ended. Additionally, as youngsters just entering adult society, the members of this group lacked political connections to

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[81] Ahmed al-Shukairy Foundation, "Biography and Legacy" http://www.ahmad-alshukairy.org/Web/WebContent.aspx?id=2 (accessed 2/22/2012); Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State : The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 96.
[82] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 96.

influential Arab leaders, and so were unable to engage in the same patterns of Palestinian politics as the preceding generation. Rather, the members of this generation were led in a dramatically different direction than that taken by the Palestinian notables of the traditional model. Supported by the historical narratives that they created, largely based on their experiences in 1948 and afterward, their outlook informed the methods that they used as they sought to bring the Palestinian issue to the attention of the global public and to liberate the Palestinian territories from Israeli occupation. By and large, the options identified by this group favored the use of guerrilla violence and terrorist attacks in support of achieving their political aims. Following the *nakba*, an untold number of these organizations operated with varying degrees of support from the Arab states For the purpose of the current study, we can divide this generation between 1948 and 1967 into two broad "camps." In terms of their ideology, the camps are distinguished by the importance they assigned to pan-Arab unity in recapturing Palestine from Israel. In more practical terms, however, they can be differentiated by the degree to which they were willing to ally themselves with the Arab states. The first group, that of the *independent operators*, is best characterized by Yasir Arafat and his compatriots in the *Fatah* guerrilla organization. Highly critical of the motives of the Arab heads of state and the role that they played in the 1948 defeat, they held that the liberation of Palestine must be achieved by Palestinians and that the movement must remain independent from the control of the Arab states. The second, which we can call the *pan-Arabists*, is best represented by George Habash and the Arab Nationalist Movement. Although initially suspicious of the Arab regimes, this group believed that the failure in 1948 was due to the lack of unity

among Arabs, and that Palestine could not effectively be restored without first achieving pan-Arab unity.[83]

Demographic Similarity

The members of this generation who rose to prominence shared remarkably similar socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. For the most part, they hailed from Palestine's growing middle class, merchantry, and low-level bureaucracy and some hailed from influential Palestinian families. Most earned at least basic university degrees and many earned graduate or medical degrees. Most of the founders of the ANM, for example, met through student organizations at American University of Beirut.[84] Habash, whose family owned a store, described his family as "fairly well off."[85] After moving with his family from Lydda to Jaffa when he was thirteen, he attended the Greek Orthodox secondary school there and another in Jerusalem. He then attended American University of Beirut for both an undergraduate degree and medical school.[86] Other of his AUB colleagues and ANM co-founders included Wadi Haddad (also of a middle-class Christian background), and Ahmad al-Khatib, from Kuwait.[87] Through their involvement in various student groups at AUB, these individuals made contacts and identified potential recruits.

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[83] George Ḥabash, "Taking Stock: An Interview with George Habash / Mahmoud Soueid," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 28 i, no. 109 (1999): 90.
[84] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 71.
[85] Ḥabash: 88.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 72-73.

Although born and raised in Cairo, Yasser Arafat's parents both came from among prominent Jerusalemite families. His father, a food and goods wholesaler, was related to Hajj Amin al-Husayni. Arafat's mother, who died when he was four years old, was a member of the Abu Saud family, one of Jerusalem's oldest and most respected, which claimed direct lineage to the Prophet Mohammed.[88] After secondary school, Arafat attended King Fuad University, where he studied engineering and, like his AMN counterparts was active in a number of student political organizations and clubs. Likewise, many of his counterparts hailed from similar backgrounds. *Fatah* co-founder Salah Khalaf (better known by his *nom de guerre* "Abu Iyad"), whose father was employed by the surveyor's office and later owned a shop in Carmel,[89] fled from Jaffa to Gaza with his family in May 1948. From Gaza, he moved to Cairo in 1951, where he attended Dar al-Ulum and was active in several Palestinian student political organizations. The al-Hasan brothers, Khalid (a *Fatah* founding member) and his younger brother, Hani, had a similar background prior to their family's exodus from Haifa following the Deir Yassin massacre. The al-Hasan's father, who died when the elder brother was thirteen, was a respected religious leader in the local community.[90] Both al-Hasan brothers studied engineering, Hani in West Germany, where he recruited guerrillas and raised funds through involvement in student organizations.[91]

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[88] A. Hart, *Arafat, Terrorist or Peacemaker? Updated Ed*, vol. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1987 (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1987), 67-68.
[89] Abu Iyad and Eric Rouleau, *My Home, My Land : A Narrative of the Palestinian Struggle* (New York: Times Books, 1981), 5.
[90] Hart, 150-51.
[91] Ibid., 153-54, 195-96.

Economic Prospects

Despite the difficulty that many Palestinian refugees had in finding employment in their new homes, as a group, these individuals were remarkably successful at finding employment, particularly in Kuwait and the other Gulf States. The expansion of middle class employment opportunities in the rapidly growing oil economies, combined with sympathy there toward the Palestinian cause, benefitted the immigrants. Khalil al-Wazir (commonly known as "Abu Jihad"), another of *Fatah*'s co-founders, and Salah Khalaf were school teachers.[92] Yasir Arafat was an engineer at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Public Works.[93] Several, including Khaled al-Hasan,[94] and Mahmoud Abbas, later chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, held influential bureaucratic positions, which they used to raise funds for the movement and secure employment and visas for other Palestinians.[95] Already active in establishing the ANM at the time of his graduation from medical school, Habash immigrated to Amman to set up a medical clinic and literacy school. Ahmad al-Khatib, one of the few non-Palestinians in the group, returned to Kuwait, where he also began a medical practice.[96]

Experiences with the Muslim Brotherhood

A further distinguishing feature of this group is its widespread involvement in the Muslim Brotherhood, particularly among the founders of *Fatah*. Arafat fought in Palestine in 1948 with a contingent of the Muslim Brotherhood from Cairo, and in the

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[92] Abu Iyad and Rouleau, 38.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid; Hart, 148; Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 84.
[96] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 74.

early 1950s helped train university students. Al-Wazir joined the Brotherhood in 1951, but left soon after to found his own organization.[97] The al-Hasan brothers were both affiliated with the Syrian branch. There were notable exceptions, however. Naturally, Christian Palestinians, like Habash and Haddad, were not members. Although he came from a strong Muslim background, Salah Khalaf stated that, while he respected the Brotherhood's efforts and sacrifices, he found their ideology "foreign" and himself drawn "toward a secular nationalism."[98]

THE FORMULATION OF A NEW POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Reaction to Experiences during the Nakba

The socioeconomic similarity in the backgrounds of these young Arabs was critical in forming a shared outlook among this generation of Palestinians, but beyond the demographic similarities between these individuals, each also experienced the *nakba* firsthand, albeit in a variety of ways. Some, like Yasir Arafat and George Habash returned to Palestine from elsewhere to take part in the fighting and help others evacuate. As already mentioned, Arafat fought against the Israelis with the Muslim Brotherhood. George Habash returned from Beirut to help in the Lydda hospital before the death of his sister and his family's expulsion from the city by Jewish soldiers. After helping them to evacuate to Ramallah he returned to Beirut to continue his medical studies.[99] The majority, however—especially those who were still teenagers at the time—were among those Palestinians who fled their homes as the Jewish lines advanced and the armies of

[97] Ibid., 81-2.
[98] Abu Iyad and Rouleau, 20.
[99] Ḥabash: 88-89.

the Arab states withdrew. Many, such as Salah Khalaf, evacuated after hearing reports of the mass killing of the residents of Deir Yassin—in fear of another such event if they were captured by the Israeli forces.[100] Al-Wazir's family was forced to leave Ramleh after it was captured by the Israelis.[101]

In the wake of the Arab defeat, the new Palestinian refugees, dismayed by the traumatic events of the *nakba* and the defeat of the Arab states, sought to understand what had happened. To the young Palestinians, the creation of Israel and the subsequent exodus essentially ended life as they knew it. To attempt to understand, and to come to terms with, this trauma required analysis and the creation of a narrative capable of explaining the events and postulating a method to restore pre-1948 Palestine. For the future leaders of *al-Fatah* and the ANM, their experiences during the *nakba* formed the basis of their historical and political analyses and the narratives they developed afterward, but they also looked to a variety of other sources for ideological inspiration and guidance. Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* was among the most influential works consumed by the founders of *Fatah* and informed their concept of revolutionary violence.[102] Salah Khalaf read widely on other revolutionary and nationalist movements including the writing of Michel Aflaq, Lenin, and Mao Zedong and followed news of the National Liberation Front in Algeria.[103] The writings of Arab nationalists Constantine Zurayk and Sati' al-Husri inspired Habash and his fellows and led them to decide that the

[100] Abu Iyad and Rouleau, 4-5.
[101] Hart, 91-93.
[102] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 91.
[103] Abu Iyad and Rouleau, 34-35.

liberation of Palestine could not be achieved without first attaining Arab unity.[104] In addition to the work of Arab nationalist theorists, the group sought inspiration from the history of other nationalist movements and the French Revolution. Habash and Haddad studied the Quran, despite their Christian backgrounds.

The Importance of Armed Struggle

Both groups were drawn to armed resistance and guerrilla activity against Israel. Following his return to Beirut from Lydda in the summer of 1948, Habash, with Wadi' Haddad and several other AUB students, began organizing for political and military activity. They soon formed their first guerrilla organization, the *Kata'ib al-Fida al-'Arabi*, which was active from 1948 to 1951. After an unsuccessful attempt by a faction of the group to assassinate Syrian president Adib al-Shishakli, however, Habash and the organization's other core members determined the need for greater organization in their efforts. In 1951, the core activists formed the Arab Nationalist Movement, based on the fundamental idea that "Palestine could not be liberated unless the Arab countries were fully freed from colonial control and thus able to concentrate their resources against Israel." Following from this, the ANM believed that all efforts should be focused on bringing about change in the Arab governments, which were tainted by their ties to Western imperialism.[105]

[104] Ḥabash: 89-90.
[105] Yezid Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox: The Arab Nationalist Movement, Armed Struggle, and Palestine, 1951-1966," *Middle East Journal* 45, (1991): 609.

Palestinians' Analysis of the Role of the Arab States in the Loss of Palestine

This criticism of the Arab states was common among the Palestinian militants, who felt that the political ambitions of the Arab heads of state, particularly Kings Abdullah of Transjordan and Farouq of Egypt, led them to sacrifice the Palestinians for the sake of territorial acquisition. Initially Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq—all were implicated in the loss of Palestine and, by 1951, all the leaders who had negotiated for armistice with Israel had been assassinated.[106] Additionally, following their defeat by Israel in 1948, all of these countries experienced at least one period of regime change, typically violent, within the next decade.

The founders of *al-Fatah* shared this criticism of the Arab states, but felt that primacy must be given to the liberation of Palestine. They felt that pan-Arab unity would be achieved through the liberation of Palestine, not the reverse. They criticized the Arab states' participation in the 1948 war for excluding the participation of Palestinian forces, and dismantling the nationalist movement.[107] They felt that the Palestinians "could expect nothing" from the Arab states; for any Palestinian movement to be successful, it would have to remain independent and operate without the support of any Arab regime.[108]

The 1952 Egyptian Revolution changed the political landscape and began a process of reorientation within the resistance movement, which viewed the new regime with mixed feelings. While the Palestinians of both camps were initially skeptical of the Free Officers, many were impressed by Nasser's opposition to the Baghdad Pact in 1955

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[106] Rubin, 205.
[107] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 88-92.
[108] Abu Iyad and Rouleau, 20-21.

and his anti-Western position. His move to nationalize the Suez Canal in 1956 and his resistance to the tripartite invasion that followed persuaded the ANM to align itself with his pan-Arab policy.[109] While the militants of the *Fatah* camp were also impressed by Nasser's anti-Western stance and the potential support of his regime, they refused to compromise their independence and freedom of maneuver by being tied to closely to any of the Arab states.[110]

During the late 1950s, as Nasser's popularity grew with his increasingly anti-western stance, the ANM became increasingly tied to Egypt and conducted a variety of operations in support of Egyptian objectives. Backed by Egyptian military and intelligence support, ANM cells located in Egypt and Jordan conducted small-scale attacks against Israeli targets. After the failure of the nationalist government in Jordan in 1957, members of the ANM also engaged in a protracted guerrilla campaign against the Jordanian government, again with the aid of Egypt, which led to their expulsion from the country in 1960.[111] The strengthening ties between the ANM and Nasser reinforced its belief in the primacy of Arab unity as a precondition for the liberation of Palestine.[112]

The breakup of the United Arab Republic in 1961 signaled the beginning of a period of ideological strain and factionalism within the ANM, tied to its emphasis on pan-Arab unity over Palestinian liberation. In response to the concerns of a number of Palestinians within the movement, a "Palestine Committee" had been formed in 1959

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[109] Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox," 610.
[110] Abu Iyad and Rouleau, 22-24.
[111] Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox," 612.
[112] Ibid.: 614.

with a structure roughly parallel to the movement's existing structure. As the Palestinians watched events in Algeria and Yemen in 1962, however, some elements found it increasingly irksome to subordinate the liberation of Palestine to Nasser's political programme.[113] It was not until 1964 that any structural changes reflecting this ideological debate took place. Due to increased discord between factions within the movement, the Palestinian Committee officially split from the main organization of the ANM to form a Palestinian "command" (although still under the control of the ANM executive committee). Despite revealing a shift toward a greater emphasis on the liberation of Palestine, the formation of a Palestinian command by the ANM did not simultaneously signal a move toward an escalation of the armed resistance, and the ANM executive committee, under Habash, remained committed to avoiding a premature confrontation with Israel, which would jeopardize Nasser's plans.[114] Because of its role as an official body tasked with actively advancing the Palestinian cause, the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1964 increased the pressure within the ANM to initiate guerrilla attacks against Israel. Although it reconfirmed its commitment to delaying military action soon after, in late 1964 the group's leadership permitted a mission from Lebanon into Galilee, which was intercepted by Israeli soldiers and resulted in the death of one militant, Khalid al-Hajj.[115]

[113] Ibid.: 617.
[114] Ibid.: 618-620.
[115] Ibid.: 620.

ANM VIEW OF ARMED STRUGGLE, 1965 – 1967

The announcement in January 1965 of *Fatah*'s armed campaign against Israel further increased the difficulty of the ANM to maintain its restraint. As *Fatah* continued its attacks against Israel, it was increasingly critical of the ANM's refusal to commitment to armed struggle. A war of words ensued in the organizations' newspapers. Through its official mouthpiece, *Fatah* criticized the ANM's refusal to engage in guerrilla action against Israel. The ANM responded in support of the Nasserist line of action through its existing weekly, *al-Hurriyah*, as also created a new series entitled *Filastin*, which was supplement to the Beiruti *al-Muhurrir* newspaper.

Nevertheless, as Arab opposition to Israel grew more heated throughout the mid-1960s, the ANM faced increasing internal and external pressure to increase its military activity. In response to increased pressure, the ANM created two front organizations tasked with conducting attacks against Israel, including the "Heroes of the Return," which was a joint endeavor between the ANM and the PLO. Despite the creation of these groups, which conducted periodic attacks inside Israel in the period leading up to June 1967, in general, the ANM maintained its position of restraint in favor of Nasser's timeline. This became easier after Nasser adopted a policy of escalation in mid-1966, which eventually led to the June 1967 war. In May of 1967 the ANM authorized its front groups to begin military action against Israel, and finally began to publicize the death of Khalid al-Hajj, which had occurred over two years prior, on June 5, 1967—the day the war broke out.[116]

[116] Ibid.: 627.

CONCLUSION

For both of these groups of Palestinians, the Six-Day War in June of 1967 served as a turning point. For Arafat and *Fatah*, it marked the beginning of a decline in their independence, and what could be viewed as a move into the mainstream, as they took control of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the "official" body representing the Palestinians, in 1968. By no means rejecting armed struggle as a legitimate method in the resistance movement, nevertheless, they subsequently embarked on a mission to increase the international political legitimacy and influence of the Palestinian cause and to develop the PLO into something state-like.

For the militants of the Arab Nationalist Movement and other like-minded groups, however, 1967 marked the beginning of a dramatic escalation in the use of violence in the name of the Palestinian cause. No longer able to contain its internal ideological conflict after the discrediting of Nasserism, following the Six-Day War, the organization fractured and many of its constituents undertook major theoretical reorientation. While this included a significant increase in the frequency of attacks, more significant is the marked diversity of the violent activities of the groups of this camp. After 1968, groups formed by splinters of both the ANM and *Fatah* greatly expanded their geographical scope and the types of operations they conducted. This phase of the resistance, characterized by an unprecedented internationalism in both the attacks conducted and the membership of the organizations involved, expanded beyond the guerrilla warfare which had characterized the resistance previously to include attacks against international transportation infrastructure, bank robberies, kidnappings, and assassinations—across the

Middle East and in Europe. Indeed, this period was characterized by the numerous high-profile airline hijackings conducted by its members between 1968 and 1976.

Chapter 3 – *Filasṭīn*: A Case Study in the Intellectual Development of the Palestinian Resistance, 1965-1967

Like guerrilla and resistance movements in Europe and the Americas, the organizations of the Palestinian resistance movement published numerous journals and newspapers. Generally speaking, these mouthpieces advanced the political agenda of the organization, sought to undermine the arguments and positions of rival organizations and opponents, and—in the case of groups engaged in violent activities—attempted to justify the faction's violent acts.[117] In the Palestinian case specifically, these serials also sought to define Palestinianism and to construct a Palestinian identity-consciousness—both among Palestinians and the Arab population, at large. Like other organizations in the Palestinian resistance movement, the Arab Nationalist Movement published several such publications, including *al-Ra'i*, in Kuwait and *al-Muharrir*, in Beirut—which was the most important pro-Nasser daily newspaper outside Egypt.[118] Between late 1964 and June 1, 1967, *al-Muharrir* released sixty-seven issues of *Filasṭīn*, a bi-weekly supplement focused specifically on Palestine-related issues.[119] *Filasṭīn* shared the objectives of other such party mouthpieces, but did so according to a distinctly pan-Arab editorial stance.

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[117] In addition to the ANM newspapers listed here, another noteworthy Palestinian resistance newspaper published during the mid-1960s was *al-Fatah*'s *Filastinuna*, "Our Palestine." See Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State : The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997). Not limited exclusively to newspapers, mid-century resistance movements in around the globe published extensively, including manifestos, books and political statements. The German Red Army Faction is particularly noteworthy in this sense. See, Aust, Stefan. *Baader-Meinhof : The inside Story of the R.A.F.* Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. Examples of many of these publications are collected in *The Red Army Faction, a Documentary History : Volume 1: Projectiles for the People*, 1st ed. (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2009).

[118] Stefan Wild, *Ghassan Kanafani : The Life of a Palestinian* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1975), 18.

[119] The earliest dated issue of *Filasṭīn* to which I have had access is issue #6, dated January 14, 1965. Taking into account its biweekly publication, its first issue was most likely published November 6, 1964, but I have been unable to confirm this.

Despite mounting internal and external pressure upon the ANM abandon its pan-Arab stance and give priority to the liberation of Palestine from Israeli occupation, throughout its publication *Filasṭīn* demonstrated the ANM's continued support for Egyptian president Gamal Abd al-Nasser's role as the leader in both the Arab world and the Palestinian question in both content and tone. *Filasṭīn*'s articles consistently advocated a pan-Arab solution to the Palestinians' political situation, supported the efforts and authority of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and discouraged widespread Palestinian guerrilla engagement in Israel. In response to the call for immediate armed resistance action, such as in *al-Fatah*'s published statements, *Filasṭīn* responded tentatively—theoretically supporting armed action, but cautioning repeatedly that further study was needed, and reminding its readers that the Arab armies were responsible for carrying the battle against the Israeli and imperialist forces—when it did come. Not limited to political and military concerns, *Filasṭīn* maintained this perspective in its engagements with Palestinian culture, endeavoring to create a greater awareness both of the richness of Palestinian culture and the traumatic loss it suffered as a result of the *nakba*. It did so within a distinctly pan-Arab rhetorical and analytical framework.

In this chapter, I will briefly describe the context and general content of the newspaper and its most important staff member—Ghassan Kanafani, a major Palestinian political journalist and author. I will then discuss the newspaper's efforts to engage Palestinian Arab collective memory in order to advance a pan-Arab Palestinian identity based on the ANM's interpretation of Palestinian historical and cultural elements. I will then discuss the ways in which the newspaper adhered to a pan-Arab political position

despite growing internal conflict. I will give particular emphasis to its stance toward guerrilla warfare, as this is the area in which it most clearly distinguished its ideology from that of the rival camp within the resistance, that of *al-Fataḥ*.

GHASSAN KANAFANI

The newspaper featured contributions from a number of journalists, political commentators, artists, and authors, but a significant amount of the periodical's material was produced by its editor-in-chief, Ghassan Kanafani, who—in addition to editing the newspaper for much of its publication, contributed numerous articles and works of short fiction. Kanafani, known outside the Middle East primarily as a novelist and write of short stories, later became the spokesman for the ANM's successor-group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and edited the PLFP newspaper *al-Hadaf* prior to his death in 1972 in a car bombing.

Kanafani shared many of the biographical similarities of the members of his political generation. Born in Acre in 1936, his father was a lawyer. Despite his family's Sunni Muslim background, he attended French missionary elementary schools prior to his family's flight from Palestine in 1948, after which they eventually settled in Damascus. In the early 1950s Kanafani became active in the Arab Nationalist Movement and played and large role in articulating and disseminating its political messages through a variety of journalistic and literary endeavors. In addition to the numerous literary works that he published prior to his assassination in 1972, Kanafani edited and produced content for several ANM-supported and affiliated newspapers during the late 1950s and much of the 1960s, including *al-Ra'i*, and *al-Hurriyya*, also in Beirut. In 1963 Kanafani assumed the

role of editor-in-chief of the new ANM newspaper *al-Muharrir*, which in the fall of 1964 began publishing *Filasṭīn*. While numerous individuals contributed to the newspaper's content, through his influence as editor, as well as the many articles and works of short fiction he contributed to the periodical, Kanafani left a clear mark on *Filasṭīn*'s content.[120]

General Content and Editorial Perspective

Each 12-page issue included a variety of content. Every edition included letters and short submissions by readers on various topics, as well as a number of political illustrations and cartoons. Many issues also included short editorials and opinion-pieces. While absent from early issues, within a few months the newspaper began carrying advertisements for a variety of businesses and products. The remainder of each edition was devoted to journalistic content. In general, an issue would carry two two-page main articles and several shorter one- or one-and-a-half-page pieces.

The newspaper's content varied from issue to issue, but the bulk of the articles throughout its publication fell into several major topical groups. For the purposes of this analysis, I categorize the majority of Filasṭīn's content as being either political, cultural, or practical—with the vast majority of *Filasṭīn*'s articles being focused on either political or cultural topics. Within each category, *Filasṭīn* addressed a wide variety of issues and sub-topics. Political concerns addressed in *Filasṭīn* included the internal politics and

[120] Wild, 17-18. Other notable contributors included Saleh Shibl and Burhan (al-)Dajani, who—along with Constantine Zurayk and others—founded the institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut in 1963. See Sami M. Moubayed, *Steel & Silk : Men and Women Who Shaped Syria 1900-2000*, Bridge between the Cultures (Seattle, WA: Cune, 2006), 465. and Sayigh, 130.

foreign relations of both Israel and the Arab states and various international assemblies, such as the United Nations, the Arab League, and the Palestinian National Congress. Particular attention was paid to matters that related to Palestine and the rights and status of Palestinian refugees. Additionally, a number of articles were also devoted to recognizing support for the Palestinians within the international community, such as by Vietnam.

The cultural material carried by *Filasṭīn* was focused on a much more narrow array of topics than was its political content. In addition to isolated articles on a variety of cultural topics, the editors of *Filasṭīn* produced several lengthy series of articles devoted to specific elements of Palestinian culture. Spanning from the supplement's fourteenth issue to its forty-ninth were two series on Palestinian authors written by Mohammed Saleh Yunis, totaling over twenty articles. Each article highlighted a Palestinian poet or novelist. These articles were typically full-page, and frequently much longer—occupying a significant portion of the issue's twelve pages. In addition to these informational pieces, every issue carried short literary pieces. Many of these were works by notable Palestinian authors, such as Kanafani's short story, "al-ʿarūs" (*The Bride*), and the poem, "khāṭara fī al-shāriʾ" (*Thoughts in the Street*), by Mahmoud Darwish, but the newspaper also published numerous short poems submitted by readers.[121] As expansive as its focus on Palestinian literary culture, *Filasṭīn*'s editors had a long-running emphasis on the geography and cultural history of Palestine. With only a handful of exceptions, every

[121] Mahmoud Darwish, "Khāṭara Fī Al-Shāriʿ," *Filasṭīn*, April 20, 1967, 11; Ghassan Kanafani, "Al-ʿArūs," *Filasṭīn*, January 28, 1965, 10-11.

issue included an item highlighting a Palestinian town. Typically these were locations inside Israel, from which Palestinians had fled in 1948-1949. Most of these articles were short, nostalgic pieces, only a few paragraphs in length, like those featuring Abu Ghush and Kufr Kana.[122] There were also several much longer pieces, such as "suqūṭ ḥaifā" (*The Fall of Haifa*), which recounted the history of the town's occupation and the flight or expulsion of its Arab Palestinian occupants.[123]

In addition to the newspaper's cultural and political material, which typically accounted for approximately nine to ten of the issue's twelve pages, there were a number of articles published, which might best be characterized as "practical" material. In general, these articles were more obviously editorial than was much of the newspaper's other journalistic content—with the exception of such items as opinion columns and political cartoons. These pieces served to provide the newspaper's perspective on specific topics directly pertaining to the liberation of Palestinian territory from Israel. Included in this category are such topics as guerrilla warfare and armed resistance, the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and *al-Fataḥ* and its armed element *al-ʿAsifa*. Typically these were somewhat formulaic, first providing ostensibly objective information about a topic and then weighing in with *Filasṭīn*'s perspective or council on the matter. These articles were generally negative—advising caution or the need for further study of an issue before engagement by the Palestinian and Arab masses. Of course, these are not neatly delimited categories and many articles contained cultural, political, and practical elements.

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[122] Filasṭīn, "Min Bilāduka: Abū Ghūsh," *Filasṭīn*, December 19, 1965, 12; Filasṭīn, "Min Bilāduka: Kufr Kana," *Filasṭīn*, February 25, 1965, 12.
[123] Walid al-Khalidi, "Suqūṭ Ḥaifā," *Filasṭīn*, May 20, 1965, 10-11.

INFLUENCING PALESTINIAN NATIONAL MEMORY

Filasṭīn's emphasis on intellectual topics indicates an interest in Palestinian culture, which at first may appear objective. But, as *Filasṭīn* was a politicized publication, written specifically to disseminate the Arab Nationalist Movement's official perspective and counter the arguments of *al-Fataḥ*, this interest in Palestinian intellectual and historical topics requires greater scrutiny.[124] Rather than undertaking an objective analysis of Palestinian culture and history, *Filasṭīn*'s engagement with Palestinian Arab culture was intended to shape the Palestinians' collective memory of their own history and heritage, in order to advance the ANM's narrative of Palestinian national identity.

After the *nakba*, Palestinians faced a "bleak reality." Of the 900,000 Palestinians who had previously lived in the area that came to be Israel, only approximately 20,000 still retained their homes and means of livelihood. Another 40,000, who had lost their homes, means of livelihood, or both remained within Israel as refugees. In the course of the Israeli expansion during 1948 and 1949, approximately 1,000,000 (of an estimated 1,400,00 total Palestinians) moved into, or remained in the "Gaza Strip" and "West Bank" areas, which did not come under Israeli control. An additional 300,000 fled Palestine to the surrounding Arab states, including approximately 100,000 to Transjordan (which also annexed the West Bank), 104,000 to Lebanon, and 82,000 to Syria.125 As seen in the previous chapter in the cases of Yasir Arafat, George Habash and their upper and middle class compatriots, some Palestinians were able to assimilate into the

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[124] Yezid Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox: The Arab Nationalist Movement, Armed Struggle, and Palestine, 1951-1966," Middle East Journal 45, (1991): 621.

[125] Rosemary Sayigh, Palestinians : From Peasants to Revolutionaries : A People's History, Middle East Series No 3 (London: Zed Press, 1979), 98-100.

economies of their new homes, but the vast majority of the working class and peasant refugees came to inhabit refugee camps with little hope for economic or social mobility.[126] Like the Palestinian political structure, as discussed in the previous chapter, the social structure of the Palestinians was [severely traumatized and damaged in a way that required Palestinians to seek a new understanding of their situation] by the *nakba*.[127] In addition to the traumatic loss of life, home, and economic prospects that these Palestinians experienced as a result of the *nakba*, the dispersion had also severed the traditional social and political networks, upon which Palestinian identity had been based for centuries, as discussed in chapter 1. In effect, the Palestinians, who in April 1948 had constituted a 69% majority of the population in Palestine, had by 1949 become displaced and scattered throughout Israel and the surrounding Arab states, largely without economic prospects and isolated from the geographic and sociopolitical foundations of Palestinian identity.[128] Traumatized and humiliated, the Palestinians after 1948 sought both to historicize the events of 1948 and to restore their own dignity.

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[126] As discussed in the previous chapter, the upper and upper-middle class Palestinian exiles benefitted from the expanding educational systems in many Arab countries and the rapidly growing economies of the Gulf states, in particular. Despite this, many from these groups still had difficulty finding work. Those in the lower classes or who had been rural peasants until the *nakba* were largely passed over by these advances altogether. See Gérard Chaliand, *The Palestinian Resistance* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), 22. Also, Sayigh, *Palestinians : From Peasants to Revolutionaries : A People's History*, 113-118.

[127] Sayigh, *Palestinians : From Peasants to Revolutionaries : A People's History*, 103-107.

[128] In Haim Bresheeth's study on memory of the *nakba* and its representation in contemporary Palestinian film, "The Continuity of Trauma and Struggle," the author identifies four "levels" of loss experienced by the Palestinians due to the *nakba*. The first, that of the nation or country, he states is the deepest, responsible for a persistent melancholia suffered by Palestinians since 1948. The second layer is that of the locale—the towns and villages occupied and destroyed by the Israelis and previously the source of Palestinians' conception of *self*. Bresheeth's third area is that of family. Familial groups, which were the basic unit of social organization in Palestine, were broken up in the diaspora that accompanied the *nakba*, causing enduring changes to the structure of Palestinian society. Bresheeth's last layer is the individual Palestinian. Hiam Bresheeth, "The Continuity of Trauma and Struggle : Recent Cinematic Representations

Arab intellectuals immediately began to theorize about the cause of the Arab defeat in 1948 and, during the 1950s, a large body of work focusing on the plight of the Palestinians began to amass.[129] Joining the pre-1948 body of Arab Nationalist scholarship, which included the influential work of Sati' al-Husri, were a number of new political studies, including work Constantin Zurayk's influential analysis *Ma'nā al-Nakba* ("The Meaning of the Nakba"), which was cited by George Habash as one of the ANM's primary ideological influences.[130] Zurayk, a professor at the American University of Beirut, was an established Arab Nationalist thinker prior to the *nakba* and had published A*l-Wa'ī al-Qawmi* ("The National Consciousness"), a volume of essays arguing on national consciousness, in 1939.[131] In *Ma'nā al-Nakba,* which Zurayk wrote in August 1948, he argues that the *nakba* was a catastrophe for the Arab people, caused by backwardness. This backwardness, he argues, must be overcome by the Arab nation through modernism and rationality.[132] In addition to political studies, numerous poets, novelists, and playwrights addressed the Palestinians' experiences during the *nakba* and the exigencies they suffered afterward. *Filasṭīn* engaged these topics as well. Rather than objectively analyze Palestinian history and culture, the editors of *Filasṭīn* selectively

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of the Nakba," in *Nakba : Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory*, ed. Ahmad H. Sa'di and Lila Abu-Lughod(New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 180.

[129] I. S. Lustick, "Changing Rationales for Political Violence in the Arab-Israeli Conflict," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 77, no. 20 i (1990): 66.

[130] George Habash, "Taking Stock: An Interview with George Habash / Mahmoud Soueid," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 28 i, no. 109 (1999): 90.

[131] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (Cambridge Cambridgeshire ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 309.

[132] Elias Khoury, "Rethinking the Nakba," *Critical Inquiry* 38, no. 2 (2012): 256.

emphasized elements that supported a Palestinian identity that complied with the ANM's desired narrative, simultaneously targeting both Palestinian and non-Palestinian Arabs.

A primary objective of nationalist literature is to restructure memory—both collective and individual, in effect, to replace alternative interpretive frameworks with a one that supports the nationalist narrative. This is done by giving preference to specific events and ideas that support the nationalist narrative, and ignoring or effacing those which detract from or problematize the intended history.[133] Likewise, *Filasṭīn* emphasized specific themes and details in its studies of Palestinian history and culture to its own ends.

A major element in *Filasṭīn*'s efforts to affect Palestinian identity was its engagement with the memory of Palestinian Arabs, particularly their collective memory of pre-*nakba* Palestinian society and to evoke a sense of cultural loss and victimhood. In *Filasṭīn*, much of this was done through a literary study—certainly to a great extent due to the influence of Kanafani on the newspaper's content. Highlighting the literary contributions of Palestinians served to emphasize Palestine's reputation as one of the most relatively well-educated and literate areas in the Arab regions of the Ottoman Empire.[134] It also attempted to produce a conception of Palestinians, not only among Palestinians but also among *al-Muharrir*'s non-Palestinian readers, which situated

[133] Reeva Simon looks at this extensively in her work on Iraq's attempts to encourage and influence the development of Iraqi national identity in the period between the World Wars. Simon studies Iraqi history curricula, and the ways in which topics and personalities were selected for emphasis in order to support the nationalist narrative advanced by the new state's leadership. The nationalist writings of Sati' al-Husri, one of the primary officials responsible for the development of Iraq's education system, was also a major influence of the heads of the ANM. See Simon, Reeva S. *Iraq Between the Two World Wars: The Creation and Implementation of a National Ideology.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

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Palestinians within the scholarly tradition of the *nahda* and post-n*ahda* eras and therefore among the Arab intellectuals of Cairo and Beirut. The major portion of *Filasṭīn*'s analysis was conducted through a series of over twenty articles written by Mohammed Saleh Yunis, each featuring a different Palestinian writer. The articles, which overwhelmingly featured poets, provided some biographical information about their subjects, but were primarily concerned with discussing intellectual themes present in their work. Yunis's greatest emphasis was on the nationalist themes and concepts expressed in the work of these authors and he reiterates in multiple articles that the roots of Palestinian nationalist poetry predate the *nakba* by decades.[135] The dominant theme repeated throughout the articles is the position of *waṭan*, or homeland, in the work of these authors. In his article on Fadwa Tuqan (1917 – 2003), Yunis stresses this when he describes the "catastrophic rupture of [her] homeland and the displacement of its people" as one of three great personal tragedies in her life, which influenced her work.[136] This trauma added to the pain she experienced due to the death of her brother, Ibrahim Tuqan (b. 1905) in 1941. Ibrahim, also a noted Palestinian poet, was a major influence in her life, and Yunis attributes an interest in the meanings of death (*maut*) and nothingness (*'adam*) in her work to these traumatic episodes. Ibrahim, who was largely responsible for Fadwa's education and introduction to poetry, was also an ardent nationalist and was vocally critical of the Palestinian leadership during the Mandate.[137]

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136 Mohammed Salih Yunis, "Fadwā Ṭuqān: Al-Lahan Al-Ḥazīn Alladhī Wahaba Nafsahu Lil-Waṭan Wa Al-Ḥiyya," *Filastin*, August 26, 1965 1965, 10-11.

137 Mohammed Salih Yunis, "Ibrāhīm Ṭuqān: Al-Shāʿir Al-Ṭalīʿ Al-Thāʾir " *Filastin*, July 1, 1965 1965, 10-11.

Similarly, in his article on ‘Abd al-Rahim Mahmoud (1913 – 1948), Yunis highlights the poet’s deep nationalist feelings and opposition to the British. These sentiments led him to participate in the 1936 Revolt and the 1941 Rashid ‘Ali al-Kaylani coup in Iraq before he was killed fighting the Israeli expansion in Palestine in June 1948.[138] Prominent themes in his work included the conscience of the Arab people, the Balfour Declaration, and homeland, but he also emphasized that “speech and poetry would not be sufficient to solve his country’s problems” because Palestine was “handicapped” by its limited capacity for action.[139] In support of his primarily emphasis on these poets’ nationalist sentiments, Yunis highlights other common themes that go hand-in-hand. Other common concepts include those of conscience and heroism, prominent in the work of Mutlaq ‘abd al-Khaliq, who wrote of the hero as an ordinary man; one who experiences fear, weakness, doubt and despair.[140] In the poetry and prose of Ibrahim al-Dabbagh, Yunis highlights the concepts of responsibility and sacrifice, as al-Dabbagh declares his “absolute love” for freedom and asks his fellow countrymen when they will “give their blood” for their country.[141]

In addition to *Filasṭīn*’s broad literary focus, the newspaper also printed a number of articles devoted to recalling the villages and locales of Palestine which were occupied or destroyed in the course of the *nakba*. Almost every issue of *Filasṭīn* featured a small

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139 Mohammed Salih Yunis, "Abd Al-Raḥīm Maḥmūd: Ḥamila Rūḥhu Alā Rāḥataihi Wa Kataba Bi-Istishhādhu Malhamathu Al-Kubrā," *Filastin*, July 29, 1965 1965.

140 Khalid A. Sulaiman, *Palestine and Modern Arab Poetry* (London: Zed, 1984), 32; Mohammed Saleh Yunis, "Muṭlaq ‘Abd Al-Khāliq: Al-Laḥn Aladhī Lam Yuktamal," *Filasṭīn*, May 6, 1965, 10-11.

141 Mohammed Salih Yunis, "Ibrāhīm Al-Dabbāgh: Al-Shā'ir Aladhī Rafaḍa an Yarfas Qalimhu," *Filasṭīn*, June 17, 1965, 10-11.

article under the heading of "From Your Country," each of which reminisced about a location from which Palestinians had fled or been expelled in 1948-1949. These were short, nostalgic articles of around one hundred words each, which provided a small amount of basic information. In addition to these smaller articles, *Filasṭīn* also published several much longer pieces, such as "The Fall of Haifa" in issue 15 (May 20, 1965), which provided more-detailed narratives about several of the larger Palestinian cities. These articles discussed the Arab efforts to defend against the Israelis advance and their eventual defeat, focusing less on nostalgia and more on the violence and trauma inflicted by the military campaign on the Palestinians.142

Throughout these articles, *Filasṭīn* engaged with topics related to Palestinian culture in order to create and reinforce a particular collective memory of Palestine, which advanced its pan-Arab objective. The identity that *Filasṭīn* sought to formulate is not clearly defined, but it is implied by the themes the newspaper's editors chose to emphasize. Those of trauma and loss of homeland supported a memory of the *nakba* focused on violence and social disintegration—which, forming the basis of pre-*nakba* Palestinian identity, translated into a loss of the pre-*nakba* self.[143] On the other hand, emphasis on themes such as conscience and British and Zionist culpability in the *nakba*

142 al-Khalidi, "Suqūṭ Ḥaifā," *Filastin*, May 20, 1965.

143 One of the main emphases in Rosemary Sayigh's study of Palestinian social transformation after the *nakba* is that Palestinian identity prior to the *nakba* was largely identity based, because of the Palestinians' unique form of rural social organization, which was based upon communal use of shared farm land and discouraged geographic mobility among the population. The destruction of this social framework, and in particular the physical separation of the peasants from their land, constituted the basis for a serious, and continual identity crisis following the *nakba*. See Sayigh, *Palestinians : From Peasants to Revolutionaries : A People's History*. Also, Bresheeth, 180.

and guilt for the Palestinians' post-1948 situation suggested that the responsibility to rectify the Palestinians situation was shared by all Arabs.

ARAB NATIONALIST POLITICAL EMPHASIS

Despite *Filasṭīn*'s broad cultural objectives, the majority of its articles were written on political topics. These articles, which included approximately 150 full-length articles and several hundred shorter columns and opinion-pieces on various political topics, attempted to advance a political perspective among *Filasṭīn*'s Palestinian and non-Palestinian readers which was in parallel with its cultural narrative. Like its cultural narrative, which we have seen supported a pan-Arab conception of Palestinian identity focused on a rich cultural heritage devastated by loss of the homeland and the destruction of social institutions, its political content supported a similar political narrative that advanced the Arab Nationalist Movement's pan-Arab political objectives. These objectives, which included increasing non-Palestinian awareness of the Palestinians' post-*nakba* plight and thereby evoking a sense of duty among all Arabs to aid the Palestinians, advocating the PLO as the Palestinians' legitimate representative, and supporting al-Nasser's political maneuvers against Israel and Western Imperialism.

Unlike its cultural focus, which does not contradict or differ materially from that which might be supported by members of the Palestinian resistance's alternative camp, such as the members of *al-Fataḥ*, the position adopted by *Filasṭīn* in its articles that focus on political topics clearly opposed that of *al-Fataḥ,* and in some cases responded directly

to it.[144] As previously mentioned, the political topics that *Filasṭīn* addressed varied widely from issue to issue, but several topics were of constant concern to the newspaper. Two of these, in particular, clearly distinguish *Filasṭīn*'s perspective from that of *al-Fataḥ.* The first is its treatment of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Arab states. While this is a broad category, which includes articles on many diverse sub-topics, *Filasṭīn* consistently voices support for the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, and for Gamal 'abd al-Nasser as the leader in the Palestinians' struggle against Israel and its occupation of Palestine.[145] In particular, *Filasṭīn*'s coverage of the PLO was consistently supportive of the organization's claim to be the official representative body of the Palestinian people and was uncritical of its policies and actions. In May 1965, for instance, *Filasṭīn* published an anonymous two-part series reviewing the PLO's achievements during its first year in existence, which coincided with the second Palestinian National Council to be held on the 28th of that same month in Gaza. [146] In the first article, *Filasṭīn* asserted that the organization's first year had been "crowded with activity," which had laid a foundation for political achievements which would be difficult for Israel to undo. The author states that it is necessary to discuss the nature and significance of the organization's achievements, but because of the uniqueness of the organization, these achievements can only be judged by the organization's own standard.

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[144] Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox," 621.

[145] Moshe Shemesh states that initially the Arab Nationalist Movement was unhappy with the way in which Shukairy established the PLO, but saw its establishment as an "opportunity to strengthen its hold on the Palestinians" and a means to achieving Arab unity, and so therefore determined to support the organization. This debate is transparent in *Filastin*. Moshe Shemesh, *The Palestinian Entity, 1959-1974 : Arab Politics and the Plo*, 2nd rev. ed. (London ; Portland, OR: Frank Cass & Co., 1996), 49.

[146] Filasṭīn, "Munḍima Al-Taḥrīr Baʿad ʿĀm… Aina? Wa Limādha? Wa Kaif? ," *Filasṭīn*, May 6, 1966 1966.

The author then describes the evolution of the PLO's structure and organization during the previous year, including the selection of its executive committee, the national council, and the clarification of several articles of its charter. He also elaborates on the articles of the charter which deal with the organization's ability to raise military units, first explaining that the charter authorizes the PLO to raise units as is deemed necessary by the Arab leadership, but also reminding readers that the objective of these units is not to serve as the decisive force in a future war against Israel. Rather, this function will remain the responsibility of the armies of the Arab states and the units raised by the PLO are to function as a strike force, or a commando vanguard, to be employed at the discretion of the Arab armies.[147]

Throughout the article, the author's concern is one of clarification, and any element of criticism is completely absent. While not explicitly referring to any particular public debate over the PLO, the author gives a strong sense that he is responding to ongoing discussion or confusion related to the PLO, with the intent of providing clarity that will settle the issue for good. This debate is strongly implied at the closing of the article, when the author states that the problem the PLO continues to face is that of the unification of the numerous factions of the resistance. Achieving this, he says, will be a "big step forward" in the effectiveness of the organization.[148] In effect, *Filastin* responded to two debates in this article. Through its uncritical engagement with the PLO, in contrast with *al-Fatah*, which rejected Ahmed Shuqairy's patronage of al-Nasser and

[147] Filasṭīn, "Munḍima Al-Taḥrīr Baʿd ʿĀm… Aina? Wa Limādha? Wa Kaif? ," *Filastin*, May 6, 1966 1966.
[148] Filasṭīn, "Munḍima Al-Taḥrīr Baʿd ʿĀm… Aina? Wa Limādha? Wa Kaif? ."

the Arab states, it implicitly supported the PLO's legitimacy as the representative body of the Palestinian people.[149] Equally noteworthy, *Filastin*'s treatment of the PLO in this article, in particular its deliberate clarification of articles of the organization's charter, addresses a debate regarding the PLO within the ANM. Initially, some within the ANM were critical of the way in which Shukairy established the PLO, in particular the way in which the representatives in its governing bodies were to be elected and what they perceived as a lack of revolutionary character in the organization.[150] Although transparent to readers unaware of the ANM's internal politics, *Filastin*'s treatment here directly addresses this internal debate, and should be viewed as a move to end the discussion within the ANM by providing a final word on the issue. The second article in the series, published in the newspaper's next issue, consists of three statements from the PLO, and further emphasizes the newspaper's support for the PLO.[151] These responses, submitted by the PLO's research center, by Shafiq al-Hut, the director of the organization's Beirut office, and by Nicola al-Durr, a member of the executive committee, discuss their opinions on the organization's achievements, policies, and the way forward. Despite the subtitle of the article, "Thalātha Radūd Min Dākhil al-Munẓama fī Muḥāwila li-Taqyīm Al-Tajriba Mauḍu'iyyān (Three Responses from Inside the Organization in an Attempt

[149] Shemesh, 48.
[150] Ibid., 49.
[151] Filasṭīn, "Munḍima Al-Taḥrīr Fī ʿĀm: Thalātha Radūd Min Dākhil Al-Munẓama Fī Muḥāwila Li-Taqyīm Al-Tajriba Mauḍu Iyyān," *Filasṭīn*, May 26, 1965, 4-5; Shemesh, 80-84.

to Evaluate the Experience *Objectively*—emphasis added), the statements are published without comment from *Filasṭīn* or any of the PLO's critics.[152]

This treatment is consistent in *Filasṭīn*'s coverage of the PLO and organizations affiliated to it or to the ANM. Similar to the PLO officials' responses published by *Filasṭīn* in May 1965, in the January 26, 1967, edition *Filasṭīn* printed an article entitled "'Abṭāl al-'Auda' Yaqūmūn bi-Ghāra Nājiḥa ʿAlā Bait Jabrīn" (The Heroes of the Return Undertake Successful Raid of Beit Jibrin), which offers a further example of favorable coverage of such affiliated organizations.[153] In the article, *Filasṭīn* relates a recent statement released by the guerrilla organization *Abtal al-'auda* ("The Heroes of the Return") publicizing a raid it conducted from Jordan into Israel. The organization, which was an ANM-affiliated fedayeen group, was formed with the PLO's approval in October 1966 in response to mounting criticism of the ANM's refusal to initiate guerrilla warfare against Israel.154 The article begins by summarizing the statement's account of the actions conducted by a detachment of the group during a raid conducted during the previous week. *Filasṭīn* then publishes, verbatim and without commentary, a statement from the group decrying "traitors" in the Arab states and stating that the fedayeen will not forget the sacrifices of those who came before.155

These articles discussing groups within the pan-Arab camp contrast starkly with those discussing organizations which were not aligned closely with the ANM and the

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[152] Filasṭīn, "Munḍima Al-Taḥrīr Fī ʿĀm: Thalātha Radūd Min Dākhil Al-Munẓama Fī Muḥāwila Li-Taqyīm Al-Tajriba Mauḍu Ìyyān," *Filastin*, May 26, 1965, 4-5.
[153] Filasṭīn, "'Abṭāl Al-ʿAuda" Yaqūmūn Bi-Ghāra Nājiḥa ʿAlā Bait Jabrīn," *Filasṭīn*, January 26, 1967, 9.
[154] Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox," 626.
[155] Filasṭīn, "'Abṭāl Al-ʿAuda" Yaqūmūn Bi-Ghāra Nājiḥa ʿAlā Bait Jabrīn," *Filastin*, January 26, 1967, 9.

PLO. Rather, the articles were more critical and were written in a more negative tone overall. When discussing these groups, such as *al-Asifa*, with which the ANM differed on elements of strategy, but still fell within the resistance movement, *Filasṭīn* was but not openly hostile, but neither did it agree unquestioningly. In the February 11, 1965 issue, *Filasṭīn* discussed a recent debate which had taken place in its parent newspaper, *al-Muharrir* (also edited by Ghassan Kanafani), around several recent *al-ʻĀsifa* political and military statements. *Filasṭīn* reprinted portions of three articles which had been published in recent editions of *al-Muharrir*. In the first, *al-Muharrir* argued that, while guerrilla action has been a part of resistance in Palestine for years, it was unclear how *al-ʻĀsifa*'s plans would lead to the liberation of Palestine. *Al-Muharrir* further suggested that *al-ʻĀsifa*'s plan may be in conflict with the "official" Palestinian plan (i.e., that of Gamal ʻabd al-Nasser and the PLO), and that *al-ʻĀsifa* needed to clarify how commando operations could to lead to a war that would liberate Palestine. *Filasṭīn* then summarized two responses printed in subsequent issues of *al-Muharrir*—one by a member of a *al-ʻĀsifa* and another disputing *al-ʻĀsifa*'s claims that guerrilla action against Israel will lead to the liberation of Palestine.[156] While not flatly refuting *al-ʻĀsifa*'s statement, *Filasṭīn*'s publication of alternative viewpoints and critical arguments illustrates a distinct divergence from the coverage it gave to groups within its own organizational network.

Filasṭīn's most intense criticism was reserved for Israel and those entities that opposed al-Nasser's movement altogether, including Arab states not aligned with Egypt. In one such example, an article entitled "New Schemes for the Liquidation of the

[156] Filasṭīn, "Al-ʿAsifa Wa Mintaq Al-ʿAmal Al-Fidā Ī," *Filastin*, February 11, 1965, 5.

Palestinian Issue," which alleged a joint Saudi-Jordanian plot to sabotage the PLO, *Filasṭīn* engages an acrimonious tone typically reserved for discussions of Israel. Calling Hajj Amin al-Husayni a "tool" of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, *Filasṭīn* accuses Jordan and the Higher Arab Committee of orchestrating a plot to eliminate the Palestinian entity because it was a danger to the interests of Jordan, Israel and America.[157]

This editorial approach, despite claims of objectivity on the part of *Filastin*, clearly illustrated the newspaper's support of organizations within the nationalist camp attempted to undermine and criticize those entities in opposition to it.

THE ROLE OF ARMED STRUGGLE IN THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE

The second area in which the ideological distance between *Filasṭīn*'s leadership and that of the opposing Palestinian factions is clear is in its articles discussing the role and function of "armed resistance" or "guerrilla action" against Israel. As discussed in the previous chapter, *al-Fataḥ* supported immediate commando engagement of Israel, with the intent of provoking a war between Israel and the Arab states. While the Arab Nationalist Movement supported this, in theory, prior to the outbreak of war in 1967, the ANM adhered to an increasingly unpopular position that maintained the time was not yet right for widespread guerrilla activity.[158] Furthermore, they argued, provoking a war before the correct conditions were set would have disastrous results for the Arabs. While, this position became increasingly unpopular in the mid-1960s, *Filasṭīn*'s treatment of the

[157] Filasṭīn, "Mukhaṭaṭāt Jadīd Liṭaṣfiya Al-Qaḍīa Al-Filasṭiniyya," Filastin, April 6, 1967.
[158] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 111.

issue continued to support al-Nasser's timeline, despite the ANM's growing internal conflict.[159]

That this was a complicated issue for the ANM, is clearly reflected in the position *Filasṭīn* took toward fedayeen action against Israel. Because of popular support among the Palestinian population for armed resistance and the ANM's own bifurcated position on the issue, it could not be too openly critical of the guerrillas. On the other hand, because of the ANM's official position delaying widespread guerrilla action in deference to Gamal 'abd al-Nasser's programme, neither could *Filasṭīn* be too supportive or enthusiastic.[160] The result of this conflicted position was that the newspaper's articles were generally supportive at a theoretical level, but consistently cautioned hesitation and a need for further study before Palestinians initiated large-scale commando operations. Throughout its publication, *Filasṭīn* printed a number of articles dealing with a elements of guerrilla warfare employing this approach. *Filasṭīn*'s editors were fond of comparing Palestine to other popular movements around the world, particularly those in China and Vietnam.[161] In one such article, detailing North Vietnamese success using guerrilla warfare against French and American forces, the author notes that, while the peasants in

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[159] Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox," 620-622.

[160] A phrase coined by Ghassan Kanafani to express the ANM's desired level of escalation during this period: "above zero, but below entanglement." This demonstrated the ANM's continued support of al-Nasser's policy delaying military activity against Israel, but also reflected the fact that many within the organization shared *al-Fatah*'s desire to engage in guerrilla or other forms of military operation against Israel. Ibid.

[161] In addition to the articles discussed here, *Filastin* published numerous other articles that suggested similarity between the Palestinians and other popular movements of the twentieth century. These articles supported the right to resistance of these peoples, analyzed methods and theories employed elsewhere that could prove useful in Palestine, and – in the case of the Vietnamese – indicated support abroad for the Palestinians. See Filasṭīn, "Naḍiriyyat Mao Tse Tung ʿan Ḥarb Al-ʿAṣābāt," *Filasṭīn*, January 14, 1965, 5. Also, Filasṭin, "Fīitnām Má Filasṭin," *Filasṭin*, April 22, 1965, 9.

occupied countries like Vietnam and Palestine are the major force, due to long foreign occupation, they lack military expertise.[162] Guerrilla warfare is the method by which it is possible to turn their military weakness into strength. *Filasṭīn* then provides certain principles, such as striking the enemy where he is weak and immediate dispersal after attacks—to overcome the enemy's technological advantage and to prevent the enemy from identifying the guerrillas or counterattacking. While not elaborated in the article, these principles had already been employed by Palestinians, such as by Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam, against British forces during the Mandate.[163] The article continues, however, to point out that because of the guerrilla's limited capability, he cannot win decisively against a traditional military power. The final victory can only be achieved by the destruction of the enemy's forces in a traditional military campaign. The guerrilla remains important throughout this campaign, by continuing to degrade and destroy the enemy's bases and reserves.[164] As a final word, *Filasṭīn* also points out that, since the Palestinians' officers have been trained under guerrilla conditions, they lack "some of the contemporary military arts."

In another article discussing "The Art of Guerrilla Warfare," *Filasṭīn* analyzed the ambush as a form of guerrilla attack. The article, essentially a doctrinal text, lists the types of ambushes, and provides a list of steps for planning and conducting each. Explaining that an ambush is "a surprise attack against a mobile enemy without the objective of occupying the ground permanently," *Filasṭīn* distinguishes between hasty

[162] Filasṭīn, "Fann Ḥarb Al-ʿAṣābāt Kamā Sajalathu Tajārib Al-Fītnām," *Filasṭīn*, January 28, 1965, 9.
[163] S. Abdullah Schleifer, "The Life and Thought of 'Izz-Id-Din Al-Qassam," in *Arab-Israeli Relations : Historical Background and Origins of the Conflict*, ed. Ian Lustick(New York: Garland, 1994).
[164] Filasṭīn, "Fann Ḥarb Al-ʿAṣābāt Kamā Sajalathu Tajārib Al-Fītnām," *Filastin*, January 28, 1965.

and planned ambushes and discusses planning considerations for each type, such as site selection and initiation of the attack. The articles even goes so far as to include a list of signals to use during the attack, such as to mark the approach of the enemy, to first initiate and later to cease fire, and to withdraw from the ambush once the attack is complete.[165] Despite this apparent—if tacit—approval of guerrilla action, in its next issue *Filasṭīn* returned to its reserved theoretical stance on the efficacy and appropriateness of armed struggle by the Palestinian resistance. Quoting Clausewitz's statement that "war is politics by other means," Burhan al-Dajani suggests that *al-qatal* ("killing") may be a neccessary element of the solution to the Palestians' current situation.[166] Al-Dajani argues that killing—which he distinguishes from war conducted among states in accordance with international law—has been a part of every war of colonial independence since World War II, including Vietnam, Laos, China, and in the Congo. Al-Dajani argues that, in light of the historical effectiveness of killing in this context, this "abstract" research requires that the practicality of guerrilla warfare in the Palestinian context be examined and the type of killing most applicable be determined. Al-Dajani leaves the question open for further discussion, concluding that three more issues must be considered in order to resolve it completely: the choice between peaceful coexistence and revolution; if killing is unavoidable, the form that should be used; and, the extent that it is possible to fuse the killing with the movement's political aims.

[165] Filasṭīn, "Al-Kamīn: Āsashu, Ānwā Ĥu, Ṭarīqa Iqāmathu," *Filastin*, February 25, 1965.
[166] Burhan Al-Dajani, "Mīkānīkīat Al-Ḥal Li-L Qaḍīa Al-Filasṭinīa: Al-Qaṭal," *Filasṭin*, 11 March, 1965, 3.

Filasṭīn's position regarding guerrilla engagement of Israel did evolve during its publication, particularly after the Heroes of the Return was formed in the fall of 1966.[167] While stopping short of openly supporting commando incursions into Israel even up to the beginning of the June 1967 war, *Filasṭīn*'s commentary in articles discussing the fedayeen became more positive as Egypt and its allies became increasingly aggressive toward Israel and the newspaper emphasized the negative impact of such actions within Israeli politics and society. This emphasis became particularly strident in the months leading up to the war. In one such article, "Qalq Isrā ̄ılī Wāsiʿ al-Naṭāq Baʿad al-ʿAmaliāt al-Fidā ̄ıa al-Akhīra" (*Israeli Anxiety is Widespread after the Recent Guerrilla Operations*), published in January 1967, *Filasṭīn* announced the activity of a new guerrilla squad, the 'Abd al-Latif al-Sharuru group, and reprinted a portion of the band's political statement.[168] *Filasṭīn* then lauded the success of the group and suggested that Israeli news coverage and official statements relating to the attack were misleading and attempted to downplay the incident's success. This complimentary stance on guerrilla warfare, which coincided with a general escalation in the conflict during 1967, including the blockade of the Straits of Tiran by Egyptian forces in May of that year, clearly illustrates a major evolution in the newspaper's stance on guerrilla warfare during the course of its publication.[169] As compared to its critical coverage of al-'Āsifa in February

[167] Shemesh states that the PLO's position on armed warfare began to change in the spring of 1966; starting in May of that year, Shukairy and the PLO began to praise the fida'i action and later even referred to the PLO as a fida'i organization. This change was shaped by the same forces influencing the ANM's own internal conflict over anti-Israeli guerrilla warfare. Shemesh, 88.

[168] Filasṭīn, "Qalq Isrā Īlī Wāsiʿ Al-Naṭāq Baʿad Al-ʿAmaliāt Al-Fidā Īa Al-Akhīra," *Filasṭīn*, 26 January, 1967, 9.

[169]

of 1965, by the spring of 1967 *Filastin* not only printed the statement of the ʾAbd al-Latif al-Sharuru group without criticism, implicitly supporting the band, but praised the organization's negative impact within Israel.[170]

By May of 1967, military action had grown to become the primary focus of the newspaper. The May 18, 1967 issue, which bore the headline "rāʾiḥat al-barūdʿala al-ḥaḍūr al-sūrīa al-israʾīlīa" (*The Smell of Gunpowder on the Syrian-Israeli Border*) focused almost exclusively on a coming battle between the Arabs and Israel. Included in the edition were articles such as "ghārāt fidāʾīa ṣāʾaqa tajtāḥ israʾīl" (*Lightning Guerrilla Raids are Sweeping Israel*), detailing recent "Heroes of the Return" operations and praising the activity of the guerrillas and their impact of their actions against the Palestinians enemies, as well as others emphasizing Arab strength and suggesting that Britain had a hand in the 1948 Arab defeat by confiscating weapons from the Palestinians and giving them to the Jews.[171]

Likewise, the June 1, 1967 issue, which was published during the Egyptian blockade of the Straits of Tiran, strongly emphasized Arab strength and Israeli panic. One-third of the edition's twelve pages were devoted to articles explaining the significance of Akaba to Israeli survival and the decisive effect its blockade was sure to have on the Israeli people.[172] In another article, "al-jimāhīr al-ʿarabiyya tajaddad muwāqiʾihā fī al-maʾaraka" (*The Arab Masses Renew their Positions in the Battle*),

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[170] Filasṭīn, "Al-ʿAsifa Wa Mintaq Al-ʿAmal Al-Fidā Ī," 5; Filasṭīn, "Qalq Isrā Īlī Wāsiʿ Al-Naṭāq Baʿd Al-ʿAmaliāt Al-Fidā Īa Al-Akhīra."

[171] Filasṭīn, "Ghārāt Fidāʾīa Ṣāʾaqa Tajtāḥ Israʾīl," *Filasṭīn*, 7. Filasṭin, "Kānat Brīṭānīā Tastūlī ʿAlā Aslaḥat Al-ʿArab Wa Taqaddamhā Li L-Yahūd," *Filasṭin*, May 18, 1967.

[172] For example, Filasṭin, "Israā Īl Taʾīsh Fī Jaū Min Al-Takhbuṭ Wa Al-Halʾ," *Filasṭin*, June 1, 1967, 5.

Filasṭīn reports that not only were the Arab armies and governments preparing for battle, but so also were all the "nationalist and progressive forces in the rest of the Arab land."[173] The article, in which *Filasṭin* comes its closest to an all-out call-to-arms, explains that the all the revolutionary youth of Lebanon were at that time rallying around the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the "symbol of [the] struggle" and "leader of [the] struggle." The article then reports on announcements from the revolutionary forces and the Lebanese University announcing their support of the United Arab Republic and Syria in their struggle against Zionism and colonialism. Still in heated competition with *al-'Āsifa* for influence within the movement, the article points out that these statements affirm that the authority to recruit for the military purposes belongs to the PLO, under the supervision of the Lebanese Army.[174]

The shift seen in *Filasṭin*'s position on armed struggle clearly illustrates the importance of the issue to the ANM and the other organizations within the resistance movement, as well as the heated contention surrounding its use. *Filasṭin* gives only a modest insight into the position of other organizations on the use of armed resistance through explicit engagement with their communiques and statements, but implicitly provides a wealth of information about the issue within the ANM during this time period. Despite the fact that the ANM stopped short of announcing large-scale guerrilla warfare against Israel prior to the beginning of the June 1967 war, the softening of its position on the matter, in conjunction with the increased space for activity that growing Egyptian

[173] *Filasṭīn*, "Al-Jimāhīr Al-'Arabiyya Tajaddad Muwāqi'ihā Fī Al-Ma'araka," *Filasṭīn* June 1, 1967, 4-5.
[174] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 141.

aggression against Israel provided to the Arab Nationalist organizations, indicates that such a move could have been imminent, had war not broken out on June 5th.[175]

EVOLUTION IN *FILASṬĪN*'S CONTENT, 1965-1967

This shift in *Filasṭīn*'s position on guerrilla warfare against Israel was only an element in the evolution of its overall content as relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors grew more heated in the months leading up to the June 1967 war. In addition to its softened stance on commando organizations, *Filasṭīn* displayed a shift in overall content that constituted a decrease in emphasis on Palestinian culture and an increase in emphasis on the military aspects of the resistance. While some of aspects of the newspaper's content remained largely unchanged, for instance the frequent inclusion of works of short fiction and poetry and the short geographical blurbs "From Your Country," long articles on literary topics became sparse starting in the spring of 1966 and ceased altogether after September of that year. On the other hand, interest in fedayeen and "martyrs" of the Palestinian resistance increased simultaneously. Starting in the fall of 1966, *Filasṭīn* ran articles of varying lengths informing readers of developments in the internment and prosecution of *al-ʿĀsifa* guerrilla Mahmoud abd al-Fataḥ Hijaz, who had been captured at the beginning of the year and was being held in Israeli custody.[176] Additionally, starting in February 1967, the back page of every issue featured a "wajh filasṭīnī" (*A Palestinian Face*)—a short article on a member of the resistance. Typically

[175] Yezid Sayigh points out ironically that The Heroes of the Return published an announcement on May 22, 1967 that the organization was then "fully prepared to wage the battle of liberation." However, with the outbreak of war two weeks later, the form that battle may have taken is unknown. Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox," 627.

[176] Filasṭīn published a number of articles on Hijaz and featured him on the cover twice. See, for example, Filasṭin, "Al-Baṭāl Wa Al-ʿĀsifa," *Filasṭin*, July 1, 1965, 5.

these individuals had been killed or gone missing in the conduct of guerrilla activities. Despite this shift in focus, as we have already seen, *Filasṭīn*'s editorial stance remained steadfastly in line with 'abd al-Nasser's political plan.

CONCLUSION

The steadfast adherence to Egyptian president Gamal 'abd al-Nasser's pan-Arab political agenda that *Filasṭīn* illustrated ultimately led to the downfall of the Arab Nationalist Movement after the Israeli victory in the June 1967 war. Egypt's spectacular defeat discredited its president's program. Those organizations tied closely to it, such as the ANM and PLO, underwent periods of major upheaval. Both subsequently experienced fundamental reorganization as a result of the repercussions of the failure of pan-Arabism as a political solution to the Palestinian issue became apparent. The initial leadership of the PLO, much of hailed from the older generation of Palestinian social elite—including PLO president, Ahmed Shukairy—lost much of their remaining political clout and by 1968 *al-Fataḥ*, whose outlook had been apparently confirmed by the Arab loss, had captured control of the organization. This ideological crisis proved to be too much for the ANM, which had already been fighting fragmentation for almost five years. After 1967, the several factions of the ANM split off to form new organizations, including the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by Nayef Hawatmah, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, headed by former ANM leader George Habash. These groups, which ultimately adopted Marxist philosophies, searched broadly for new underpinnings upon which to base their political theories. Stripped of their previous reluctance to engage in extensive guerrilla activity, these groups now

adopted a model of armed struggle that targeted not only Israel and its interests, but also individuals and organizations viewed by the militants as supporting and aiding Israel, such as the United States. These new guerrilla groups, of which the PFLP was the most notorious and longest-lived, embraced a philosophy of armed struggle that placed great emphasis on spectacular terrorist attacks, particularly against international commercial and transportation infrastructure. These organizations, in cooperation with New Left guerrilla groups from Europe and Asia conducted a number of spectacular attacks around the world, peaking in the mid-1970s.

Conclusion

The June 1967 Arab-Israeli War marked a major transition in the Palestinian Resistance, and the beginning of a period during which it reformulated the theoretical bases of its revolutionary principles. Both the Arab Nationalist Movement and *al-Fatah* experienced major evolutions during the following years.[177] Within months, the ANM, now unable to withstand its internal schismatic forces, split into three guerrilla organizations. The conservative faction, under the leadership of George Habash, joined with the "Heroes of the Return" to form the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The new organization adopted a much more aggressive strategy of resistance and a broadly-construed conception of the enemy, engaging in a campaign of international terrorism from that continued from 1968 through the mid-1970s.[178]

The a*l-Fatah* mainstream, which won a controlling interest in the PLO in 1968, began a process of increasing the PLO's political sway, creating a "state without a state."[179] But al-Fatah did not give up the guerrilla struggle altogether. Jordanian attempts to expel the PLO from its borders in September 1970 resulted in a civil war between Jordanian military forces and Palestinian militant. This episode then became the namesake for the "Black September Organization" – a terrorist sub-group of *al-Fatah*,

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[177] Abu Iyad and Eric Rouleau, *My Home, My Land : A Narrative of the Palestinian Struggle* (New York: Times Books, 1981), 98; Yezid Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox: The Arab Nationalist Movement, Armed Struggle, and Palestine, 1951-1966," *Middle East Journal* 45, (1991): 629; Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State : The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 303-307.

[178] As'ad AbuKhalil, "Internal Contradictions in the Pflp: Decision Making and Policy Orientation," *Middle East Journal* 41, no. 3 (1987): 362; Sayigh, "Reconstructing the Paradox," 628; Yezid Sayigh, "Turning Defeat into Opportunity: The Palestinian Guerrillas after the June 1967 War," *Middle East Journal* 46, no. 2 (1992): 256-257.

[179] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle*, 148; Moshe Shemesh, *The Palestinian Entity, 1959-1974 : Arab Politics and the Plo*, 2nd rev. ed. (London ; Portland, OR: Frank Cass & Co., 1996), 92-97.

which was responsible for the operation that resulted in the death of the members of the 1972 Israeli Olympic team.[180]

In many ways, the evolutions of these two organizations after 1967 represent a continuation of the transformative political and social processes that Palestinian society had been experiencing for the previous hundred years. While still bereft of their ancestral homeland, the PLO embarked on a process whereby it continually endeavored to become more state-like, until finally realizing official administrative and territorial form in the shape of the Palestinian Authority as a result of the 1993 Oslo Accords with Israel.[181]

As for Habash and his fellows in the ANM, who persistently rejected any political compromise which preserved the existence of the state of Israel, resistance violence followed a familiar pattern after 1967.[182] Much like the removal of traditional constraints to Palestinian tribal violence led to peasant resistance without strategic direction during the British Mandate, the terrorism of the PFLP and other similar organizations during the late 1960s and early 1970s failed to achieve any of its perpetrators' strategic objectives.[183] By substituting a Marxist interpretation of the Palestinian issue for an Arab

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[180] In his autobiography, Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) states "Black September was never a terrorist organization. It acted as an auxiliary of the Resistance, when the Resistance was no longer in a position to fully assume its military and political tasks." Despite this assertion, the BSO was responsible for a number of terrorist attacks against government and civilian targets during the early 1970s, including the assassination of Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi al-Tal on November 28, 1971 , the attack of the Saudi embassy in Khartoum in March 1973, and the deaths of the Israeli Olympians already mentioned. Abu Iyad and Rouleau, 97-98, 102, 106-112.

[181] Yezid Sayigh, "Armed Struggle and State Formation," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26, no. 4 (1997): 21.

[182] George Habash, "Taking Stock: An Interview with George Habash / Mahmoud Soueid," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 28 i, no. 109 (1999): 92-98, 100.

[183] Despite numerous strategic declarations published throughout the movement's history, the terrorist violence of the Palestinian Resistance achieved no tangible results in terms of either improving the status of the Palestinian people, or weakening the state of Israel. While bringing international awareness of the Palestinians' grievances, it failed to generate wide popular support for their cause. Ian Lustick suggested

Nationalist one, Habash still sought to rectify the causes responsible for the Arab defeat in 1948 - and now in 1967, as well – but through a new analytical framework. While adopting a Marxist ideology attracted strong support from European and Asian leftist radicals, it failed to understand the Palestinian reality.[184] Despite the remarkable internationalism that existed within the movement from 1969 to roughly 1977, ultimately the groups' unfocused and haphazard attacks, including scores of airline hijackings and the kidnapping of OPEC executives from Vienna in 1975 in a joint PFLP/RAF/JRA operation, failed to incite a peoples' war and instead resulted in the death or capture of much of the movement's primary leadership by the mid-1970s.

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that this violence may be better understood as "solipsistic," or self-directed, and intended to serve a therapeutic role, much in the sense of Fanon's argument in favor of violence in "The Wretched of the Earth." In particular, Lustick points to themes in the work of Kanafani and other Palestinian authors, which mirror those of humiliation and trauma which were emphasized in *Filastin.* In addition to these, Lustick highlights a need for revitalization and the rebuilding of national self-esteem. I. S. Lustick, "Changing Rationales for Political Violence in the Arab-Israeli Conflict," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 77, no. 20 i (1990): 54, 64-70.

[184] Samir Franjieh argues that, while the PFLP applied a Marxist template to the case of the Palestinians, the group's analysis was incorrect. In particular, conflating the displaced Palestinians with an urban proletariat was an error, because the Palestinians were by and large rural peasants who had not suffered economic exploitation by any of the entities the PFLP sought to oppose. Rather than wage a popular war of liberation, this group wished to return to their previous agrarian vocations in Palestine, or in the case of West Bank Palestinians who still occupied their ancestral territory, "the acquisition of a political identity."Samir Franjieh, "How Revolutionary Is the Palestinian Resistance? A Marxist Interpretation," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 1, no. 2 (1972): 57.

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